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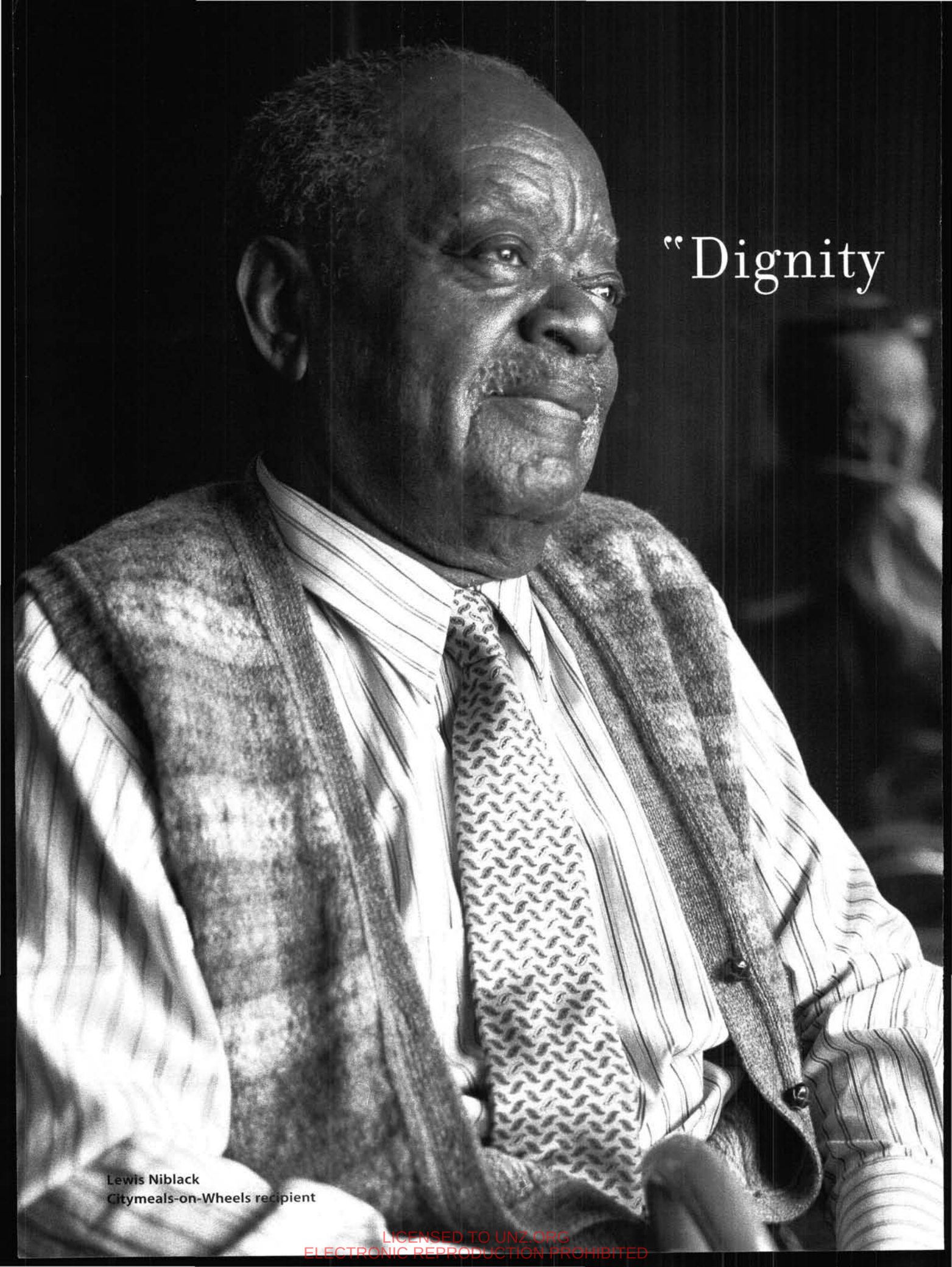

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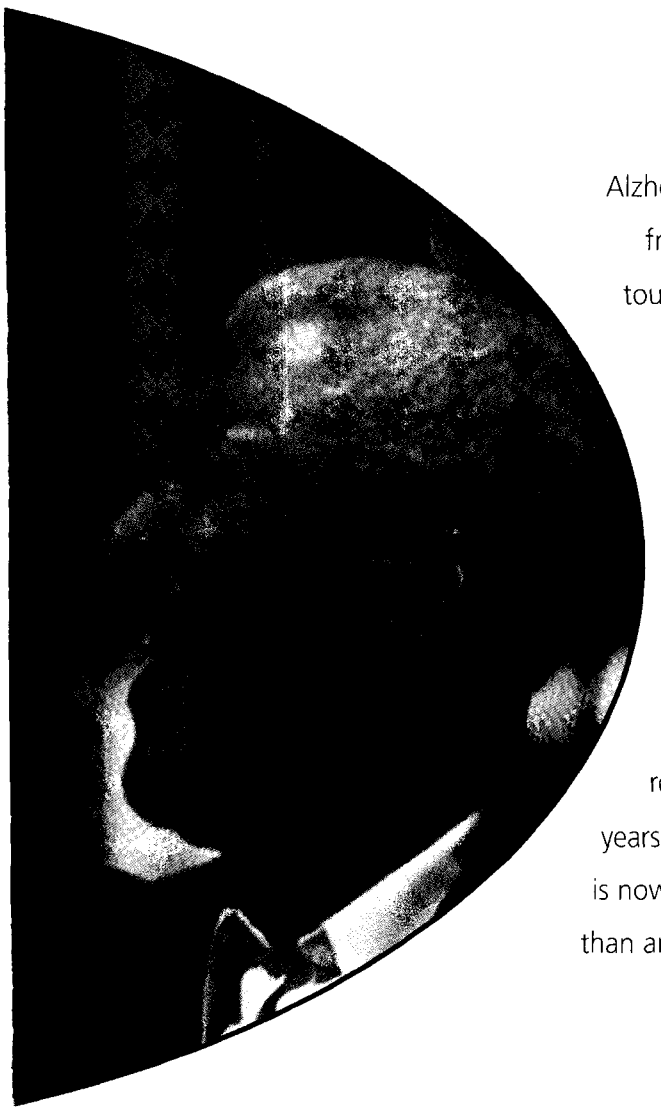

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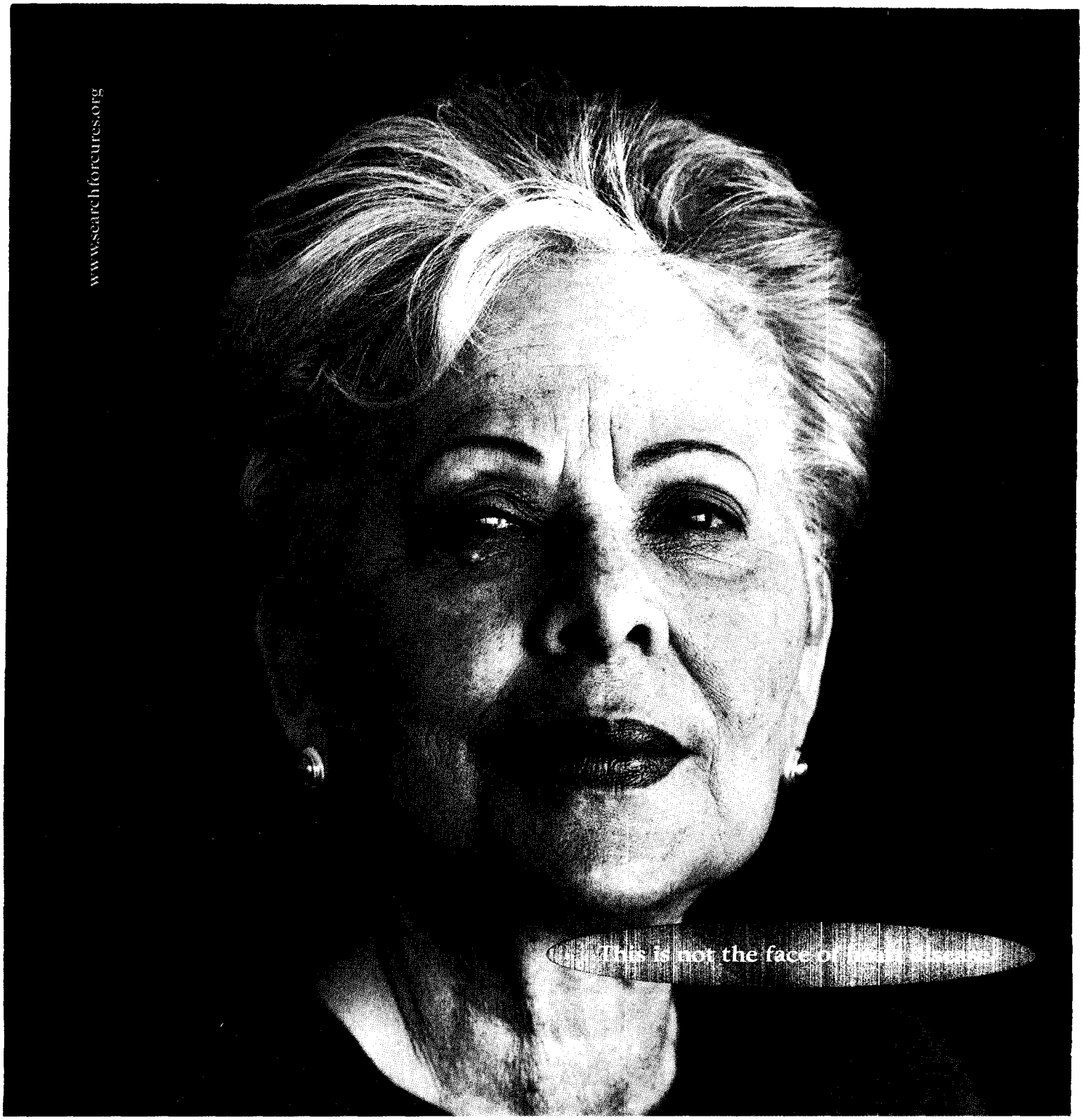

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A Journal of Politics and the Arts

WASHINGTON, D.C.
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ISSUE 4,476

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On the Cover : Illustration by MARK HESS
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THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 223, Number 18, Issue 4,476, October 30, 2000. (Printed in the United States on October 18, 2000.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated January 3, April 17 & 24, July 10 & 17, and August 28 & September 4, 2000) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. For advertising inquiries, please contact Ann Rossaki at (202) 331-7494 or Ellen Jarvis in our NY sales office at (212) 924-8700. Yearly subscriptions, $59.94; foreign, $99.94 (U.S. funds); Canada, $79.94 (U.S. funds). Back issues, $4.00 (includes postage & handling). **© 2000 by The New Republic, Inc.** **(ISSN 0028-6583). Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Rights and permissions: fax (202) 331-0275. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, Canadian Periodical Index, CD-ROM, issue, and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Postmaster: Send changes of address to The New Republic, P.O. Box 37298, Boone, IA 50037-0298. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope (e-mail address: tnr@aol.com). For subscription inquiries or problems call 1-800-827-1289 or visit our website at www.tnr.com.**

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Tipper, I shrunk the government

TO THE EDITORS:

Andrew Sullivan laments the demise of "shrinking government" as a political goal as if there were something desirable about this goal, which even Republicans have abandoned in all but name ("Back to the Future," September 25). I wish all advocates of this idea, especially those who wonder why Firestone and Ford were allowed to put profitability above safety for so many years, would spend some time in a country with a really small government, such as Nigeria. In an era when mergers are creating larger and larger corporate "giants," big government isn't always bad.

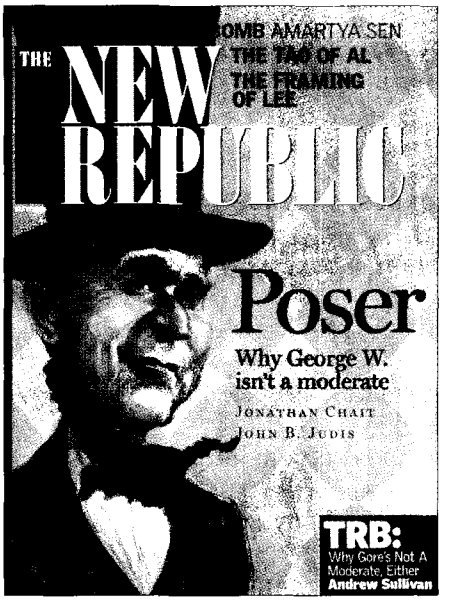
KATE ELLIS
New York, New York

Degenerate art

TO THE EDITORS:

I read with some interest Joseph Fishkin's article on the proposed World War II memorial ("Monumental Error," September 25). The image of the design was immediately arresting; I'm no architect, but the first thought I had was, "This looks like something built by the Nazis." Sure enough, Fishkin refers to others' comparisons of the memorial to the style of Albert Speer. Surely it would be the bitterest of ironies if our greatest public monument to World War II embodied Nazi aesthetics.

JACK FOUST
Charleston, South Carolina



Czech mates

TO THE EDITORS:

In "Embargoed" (September 25), Ryan Lizza writes that Joseph Lieberman "publicly chastised . . . Vàclav Havel for allowing the Czech Embassy to house Cuban diplomats in Washington, D.C." It should be pointed out that this occurred as long ago as 1990. Havel, who was elected president of Czechoslovakia in December 1989, did not really "allow" Cuban diplomats anything; the Cuban Interests Section was inherited from the Communists. The Czechoslovak Embassy, as it then was, ended the arrangement in 1991.

MARTIN WEISS
Press Secretary
Embassy of the Czech Republic
Washington, D.C.

Graven images

TO THE EDITORS:

I am not keen on defending what I wrote 30 years ago (I have since had quite different thoughts on the relation of the Second Commandment to art), but I can't help noting that Elliott Horowitz's discussion in "The People of the Image" (September 25) almost precisely parallels the point of view he faults in those early remarks—my "simplistic line" that Jewish art has historically been essentially decorative and that there has been no Jewish counterpart to Michelangelo, Rembrandt, or Rodin.

After citing painters concerned with Jewish themes—a mere three or four, none of whom lived before the nineteenth century—Horowitz is forced in the bulk of his essay to fall back on anonymous Haggadah illuminations and synagogue decorations, accompanied by an extended discourse on animal iconography. Among all those eagles, lions, and unicorns, there's not a single Jewish Michelangelo in sight. On this evidence I take it that Horowitz confirms what he has condemned.

CYNTHIA OZICK
New Rochelle, New York

TO THE EDITORS:

My relatively modest 1997 study *Dreams of Subversion in Medieval Jewish Art and Literature* receives an inordinate amount of attention in Elliott Horowitz's discussion of the realm of the visual in Jewish art. The review contains serious oversights: Had Horowitz consulted my book more carefully he would have found that the omissions he alleges (my neglect of the Bird's Head Haggadah and the fierce aspects of the "Jewish" unicorn, among others) are explicitly discussed in the text and easily found in the index. Had

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Horowitz attempted to support a counterthesis, readers might indulge the manner in which he twists the evidence I present on the Jewish use of the hare-hunt motif in illustrations of the narrative of Esau and Jacob in order to make it say the opposite of my conclusions. Since no such counterthesis is presented, however, it seems as if he discounts my research for the sake of displaying his own erudition.

But, most distressingly, Horowitz totally sidesteps my overriding thesis—that Jews in the Middle Ages, rather than being uninventive imitators of the art of the Christian majority, creatively adopted the art of that majority. Though images in art made by and for Jews appeared much the same as those featured in Christian art, they were subject to an ineluctable degree of reinterpretation when adapted to a Jewish setting. Jews, I maintain, engaged in conscious dialogue with the constellation of possible meanings for given symbols found in the art of the majority, responding to particular "moments" within a fluid iconography. This response could serve as the vehicle for indigenously Jewish messages of protest and dreams of subversion.

Horowitz gives voice at various points to his surprise about the certainty he claims I evince concerning my conclusions. But I am not "surprisingly certain" about any "meaning" I posit. I generally eschew the word "meaning" in my work, except when qualified with "possible" or "potential," preferring to call my conjectures "readings." I am completely aware of and at home with iconographic polyvalence. But I also feel justified in occasionally positing with some confidence that a given reading of a motif is a strong possibility in light of its historical, religious, or iconographic context. I prefer to risk such a reading rather than to lapse into the interpretive paralysis occasioned by the sort of deconstructionist non-readings fostered by open-ended, encyclopedic motif-cataloguing.

I should have liked to have had my thesis explicated and appraised by a worthy adversary. Instead, decontextualized aspects of one or two chapters are poked and prodded in an inconclusive and insubstantial manner. This adds nothing to the reader's understanding of my work or the issues it raises concerning the interaction of cultures—which, I believe, are of moment in the multicultural environment in which we live, work, and think.

MARC M. EPSTEIN
Assistant Professor of Religion and Jewish Studies
Vassar College
Poughkeepsie, New York

ELLIOTT HOROWITZ REPLIES:
I am pleased to learn that Cynthia Ozick now has "quite different thoughts on the relation of the Second Commandment to art" from those she expressed three decades ago. It is unclear to me, however, why she nonetheless insists I acknowledge that there has never been a "single Jewish Michelangelo." Who could claim otherwise? But have the Italians worried themselves over why there has never been an Italian Freud? Or have scholars sought to link the absence of an Italian Freud to the hostility of Catholicism to psychoanalysis? As the recent Olympic games have reminded us, different nations and cultures have their traditional strengths and weaknesses, irrespective of race or religion. The Jewish state, I must sadly acknowledge, won only a single (bronze) medal. To which commandment should that be linked?

Marc M. Epstein's resentful letter requires a longer and more detailed response than I can permit myself here. How rare to encounter an author who feels his book has received "an inordinate amount of attention" in a review essay! In my review I never alleged that Epstein neglected the Bird's Head Haggadah, but rather that he neglected Meyer Schapiro's (twice-published) essay on that Haggadah (which, in fact, is absent from his bibliography), just as he failed to consult some of Rudolph Wittkower's classic essays. But Epstein's main complaint (other than not having found me a "worthy adversary") is that I have sidestepped his "overriding thesis": that Jews, "rather than being uninventive imitators of the art of the Christian majority, creatively adopted the art of that majority." This was not precisely his thesis; nor did I sidestep it. Beyond the eminently reasonable claim that Jews "creatively adopted" motifs from Christian art, Epstein has made the more extreme (and wrongheaded) assertion that visual motifs, once transported to the Jewish realm, "could not have possibly borne the same symbolic valences" as they did in their original settings. Jewish "appropriation" of such images must therefore, in his view, have been transgressively subversive. It is in this context that I emphasized Schapiro's view that "pictorial imagery abounds in metaphors, and the same figure may carry several meanings"—some of which could be shared by both Jewish and Christian cultures. This, I think, is a very useful lesson not only for scholars but also for that "multicultural environment" in which, as Epstein aptly notes, "we live, work, and think." ■

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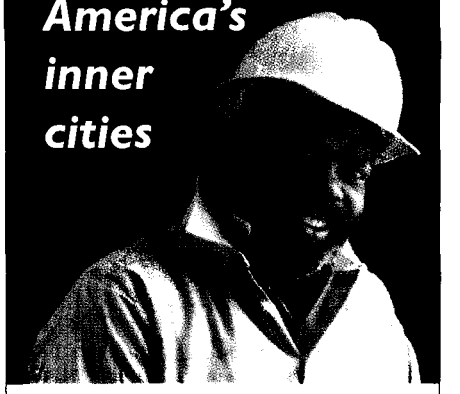

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Scoop

IF YOU'RE AN American romantic, it's hard to beat the story of Matt Drudge. Paperboy in Takoma Park, Maryland. High school dropout. 7-Eleven shelf stocker for ready cash. Never makes it to college. Moves to California. Spends his days working in the CBS studio gift shop; spends his nights listening to talk radio and police scanners. Picks up advance TV-ratings reports from the trash cans of Hollywood executives, posts them in Internet newsgroups, gets a following, starts his own website: drudgereport.com. Helps almost bring down the president of the United States.

Why hasn't Hollywood rushed a biopic into the movie theaters? Beats me. They did it with Watergate, elevating Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein to superhero status for parlaying a source's leak into the resignation of Richard Nixon. Woodward and Bernstein, of course, were liberals, and therefore heroic. They were also employees of *The Washington Post*, anointed sons in an old medium, and so had instant credibility. Watergate was also a different category of scandal than the Monica Lewinsky affair. But still.... Drudge is not only uncelebrated. He's vilified. The Lewinsky mess, whether or not you think it merited impeachment, was a massive story. And Drudge was a key player, making history from his basement apartment with a Radio Shack computer and no journalistic training or institutional support against a White House almost as ruthless as Nixon's. I tip my fedora to him.

You can tell the phoniness of the anti-Drudge consensus by its blustering incoherence. Former White House spokesmen Joe Lockhart and Mike McCurry often refused to answer press questions that emanated from rumors circulated by Drudge. It was, they averred, beneath them. Did it ever dawn on them that for almost a year Drudge was telling the truth and the president was telling grade-A, USDA-approved whoppers? You'd think the man who helped break the Lewinsky story would have gained some level of respect in its wake. But no. In the official wisdom of Washington, the hacks who rewrite White House press releases day after day are far more distinguished than the man Bill Clinton once referred to as "Sludge." (Full disclosure: Drudge's site has carried a link to my work for months, along with links to dozens of other writers.)

When Drudge's ill-conceived TV show was canned last year, his critics salivated. Frank Rich, a reliable barometer of bien-pensant liberalism, unloaded this bizarre opinion: "Journalistic watchdogs should be overjoyed at their nemesis's ignominious exit from the tube. We should be thrilled that he no longer has the power to terrorize the nation's news cycles with his apocalyptic bulletins." The pooh-bahs of journalism schools were equally dismissive. Marvin Kalb, Harvard's chief press chin-stroker, has called Drudge a "conveyor of gossipy information." Joan Konner, big *macher* at the Columbia Journalism School, has said Drudge is "by no reasonable measure working in the public interest." Give me a break. You can understand why the White House or Hillary Clinton might be happy to see Drudge take a fall. But fellow journalists? "Thrilled" that the man who was the first to air the Lewinsky story might be silenced? "Overjoyed" that a lone hack with a phone and a modem might be quashed? Here's a brief list of stories Drudge has aired first: the intern, the dress, the cigar, the MSNBC merger, Jack Kemp's vice presidential nomination, Seinfeld's $1 million-per-episode salary, Kathleen Willey's trauma, Princess Diana's death. In recent months, Drudge has pioneered the story of Dick Cheney's openly lesbian daughter and Hillary Clinton's hospitality in the White House for her campaign donors. I don't know why Rich and Konner think airing these stories is not in the public interest, but it seems to me that hypocrisy, lawbreaking, and corner-cutting among our political leaders are subjects worth raising.

Hasn't Drudge gotten lots of things wrong? Yes, he has. The worst was the vile rumor that White House aide and TNR alum Sidney Blumenthal was a wife-beater. But Drudge was contrite—more contrite than *The New York Times* was after it virtually convicted Wen Ho Lee of espionage; he withdrew the story and issued an apology within 24 hours. He's gotten other things wrong, too. But his site is transparent and accountable, and it doesn't pretend to be the finished version of the news. I see no problem with different news sources having different levels of reliability. And no one in their right mind thinks they're getting *The New York Times* when they read Drudge. On the other hand, the difference between Drudge and the "mainstream" media is subtler than the press establishment would like to admit. Drudge, for example, didn't erroneously report as front-page news that the polar ice cap is melting fast (that was the *Times*), and he didn't agree to pay Richard Jewell a reported $500,000 for all but accusing him of being a terrorist (NBC). He hasn't published self-conscious fabrications, like *The Boston Globe* or, ahem, THE NEW REPUBLIC. He's far more likely to be accurate than the talking heads on television. He does piggyback on others' stories, but he doesn't plagiarize them. His occasional partisan provocations—the obsession with Al Gore's fibs, for example—are not always enlightening, but they have counterparts elsewhere. How else to explain the *Times*' page-one airing of a nonstory about subliminal rats, planted by the Democrats?

I think a large part of the reason for the excoriation of Drudge is the defensiveness of a trade guild beaten at its own game. Many American journalists like the notion that they're not just hacks but rather guardians of our communal truth, a truth so precious it has to be vetted and approved and blessed by the media elite before it is fit for the benighted masses to imbibe. The notion that anyone with a modem and a laptop can be a journalist is truly terrifying to these people. When Drudge homes in on the journalists themselves—exposing their stories before they can, pressuring editors to be as open about their own affairs as they are about others'—panic sets in. After all, this little misanthrope now pulls in far more readers than he did in the Lewinsky era. In numbers of visitors to his site, he rivals large entities like *Slate* and *Salon*. In terms of what e-people call "pageviews"—i.e., the number of times repeat visitors actually click on and look at a page on your site—Drudge kicks e-butt: more than *Slate* and *Salon* combined and in the same ballpark as washingtonpost.com and abcnews.com. This year alone, according to numbers posted daily on his site, his hits are up almost one-third, and his new, lively, subliterate book, *Drudge Manifesto*, is on the *New York Times* best-seller list.

The numbers tell you something. If you trust readers to separate quality from dreck (and I trust them far more in this respect than I do the *Columbia Journalism Review*), Drudge is not just a commercial success but a journalistic one. If he were completely unreliable, readers would turn off and move away. But they haven't—and won't. I'm a Drudge addict myself, a recipient of his constant instant messages—and the better for it. Anyone committed to open journalism—a fallible, haphazard endeavor to find out more things and let more people know about them—should be copying Drudge, not scorning him. *Vive la révolution*, I say. My fellow hacks have nothing to lose but their pretensions.

ANDREW SULLIVAN

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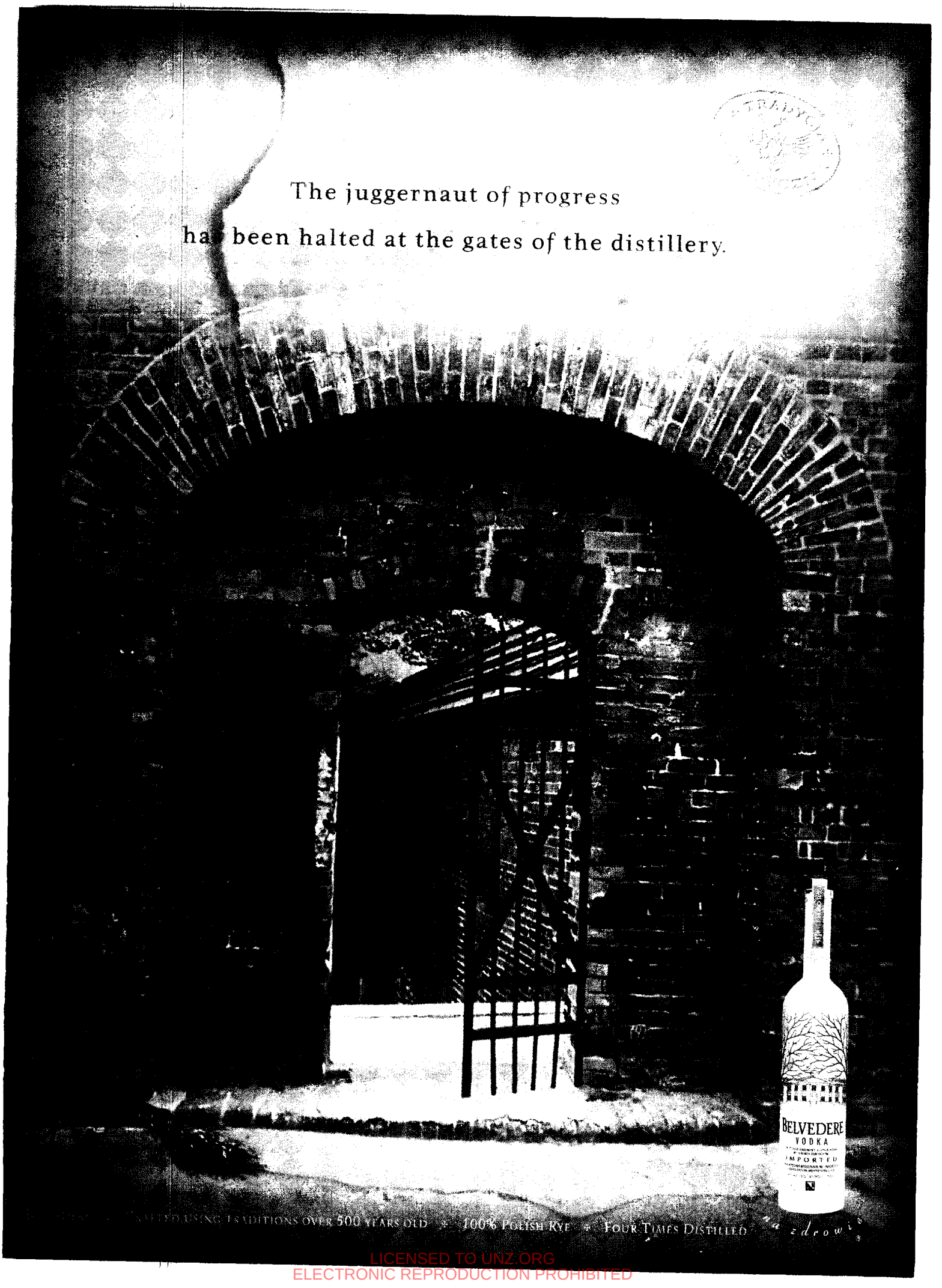
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Al Gore for President

PREVAILING OPINION DEEMS this year's presidential race a dazzling spectacle that signifies little. One moment commentators marvel at its tactical innovations—the micro-targeted messages, the instant rebuttals, the dizzying news cycles, all the technical wonders of the first razor-close campaign of the information age. The next moment they add that both candidates hail from the safe and cynical center and both, to varying degrees, promise a content and unreflective public more of the same. In this campaign, as in so many aspects of American life, the methods of communication are considered exhilarating, while the substance of communication is considered tiresome.

At least that's how many see it today. In retrospect, we suspect, people may look upon this election as one of the defining ideological moments of the post-cold-war era. Bill Clinton, a man with an extraordinary talent for inhabiting both sides of the great disputes of his time, will leave office with basic questions about post-cold-war America unanswered. Ten years after the end of World War II, America had unequivocally entered the cold war. Ten years after the New Deal, the federal welfare state was a fixture of American life. Yet today American foreign policy remains almost as formless as it was the day the Soviet Union fell. And the future of basic components of the American welfare state has rarely been less certain. The Clinton presidency has left a profound cultural legacy—it has exposed tectonic shifts in America's legal, racial, journalistic, and sexual norms. But the deeper imprint on post-cold-war politics may well come from either Al Gore or George W. Bush.

And what a different imprint it would be. The press, accustomed to associating right-wing politics with personal stridency, has largely equated Bush's sunny demeanor with ideological moderation. But on the fundamental questions facing America's next president—will the government ameliorate or exacerbate the chasm between rich and poor at home; will America use its power in service of its ideals abroad—Bush continues the radicalism that has defined his party since his father left the White House. The post-cold-war Republican Party, at its core, sees the struggle against the American welfare state as the moral extension of the struggle against international communism. How else to explain the GOP's decade-long insistence—at a time of weak government and unheard-of prosperity at the top—that this country is blighted by a lack of economic freedom, by those remaining government programs that still redistribute wealth downward? Whether Bush says it or not—indeed, whether he realizes it or not—his campaign continues the assault on those programs that Newt Gingrich began. All year, the media has wondered why GOP conservatives cheerfully accept Bush's symbolic moderation. The answer is that they, unlike many in the press, pay more attention to his policies than to his grin.

Take three of the central domestic policy disputes of this campaign: taxes, Social Security, and Medicare. Bush claims his tax cut primarily benefits the working and middle classes and that its huge windfall for the wealthy is an unavoidable by-product of that effort. But that is transparently false: Bush would cut income and estate taxes, which are highly progressive, while sparing the payroll tax, which falls more heavily on the poor. Bush sometimes says his cuts will stimulate the economy, but the economy can't grow any faster; Alan Greenspan won't let it. The only coherent justification for W.'s tax cut is the one offered by the more ideologically forthright Republicans the Bush campaign keeps offstage: that no matter how great the disparity between America's rich and everyone else, the redistribution of wealth is simply morally wrong.

The same argument underlies Bush's proposals on Social Security and Medicare. On Social Security, Bush says Americans would be better off investing some of their payroll taxes in the stock market. But Social Security provides a low "rate of return" on those taxes in part because it redistributes money to widows, the disabled, and the elderly poor. Bush's plan offers Americans a higher "return" by partially freeing them of their obligation to subsidize the retirements of the less fortunate. Similarly, Bush's Medicare reform, by allowing younger and healthier seniors to pay less for HMOs that offer less treatment, frees them from the obligation to assist the older and sicker elderly, who require more.

Gore's proposals on these issues are not flawless. While some of his tax credits are worthwhile, others look as if they were designed by a focus group. Likewise, Gore has refused to contemplate the reforms of Social Security and Medicare that he ultimately must if those programs are to survive the aging of America's population. And, in a sad irony, his decision to cater to the elderly may have actually hurt him politically by undermining his hard-won reputation as a New Democrat.

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But make no mistake: The reforms America needs—reforms that help Social Security and Medicare stay solvent as they fulfill their mission of social insurance—bear no relation to Bush's, which would save money by slowly withdrawing government's commitment to the elderly least able to care for themselves. Gore's plans for spending the surplus—on buttressing Social Security and Medicare, adding a prescription-drug benefit, and reducing the debt—at least recognize the need to extend the fruits of America's economic boom more broadly so the poor and working class continue the modest gains they have made in recent years, thus ensuring social peace. All the multiracial photo-ops in the world cannot conceal the fact that Bush's policies would do exactly the reverse.

On foreign policy, the differences between the two candidates are no less stark. This magazine admired the blunt anti-communism espoused by the Republican Party in the 1980s, a party unafraid to say American ideals were universal and worth fighting for. But how can anyone admire the Republican foreign policy of the post-cold-war era? With a few noble exceptions, the party of Reagan today adamantly denies any moral connection between the imperative to oppose Soviet totalitarianism and the imperative to oppose the newer species of tyranny that have arisen since its demise. For much of the GOP, it turns out, the global struggle for freedom ended sometime around 1989.

To be fair, George W. Bush and Dick Cheney do not share the Buchanan-style isolationism of many of the younger Republican members of Congress. They do not see international commitments as a threat to American liberty or a pollutant of American culture. To his credit, Bush has opposed immigrant-bashing in his party and in his state. But if Bush and Cheney are internationalists, they are internationalists of a distinctly parched sort. They see America as a fairly traditional great power, with "national interests" that closely mirror corporate ones and little responsibility for moral conditions in places where our security is not threatened. Judging from his statements in this campaign, Bush seems happy to see the people of Kosovo or Haiti or East Timor saved from slaughter—as long as they are saved by someone else.

Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, by contrast, are unapologetic about spending money on the military and unapologetic about using it to pursue American ideals. From Iraq to Bosnia to Haiti, both men have shown an unusual willingness to discern the ethical imperatives in foreign policy crises where many in their own party and in the Armed Forces saw only costs, risks, and moral equivalence between oppressors and oppressed. In Israel, as well, Gore is more sensitive than both his opponent and his current boss to the moral asymmetry between an elected government in Jerusalem and a leadership in Gaza City rarely inhibited by the rule of law. In the second debate, when Bush denounced "nation-building" and Gore reminded him that America successfully rebuilt the nations of Western Europe after World War II, the two candidates offered two vastly different models for post-cold-war foreign policy: one that sees the struggle for democracy as detrimental to national security and another that sees it as security's surest guarantee.

But this campaign has not been fought simply on issues; it has also been about "character." In the common formulation, Bush is dim but honest, while Gore is bright but untrustworthy. Fewer journalistic clichés are as stupid. To be sure, Gore is a politician—he panders, he exaggerates. But, under the idiotic rules that have governed media coverage in the final weeks of Campaign 2000, personal anecdotes are tests of truthfulness, while disputes over policy never are. The reality underlying those disputes is that because polls show that Gore's policies generally command greater public support, it is Bush who more frequently misrepresents them and his own. Gore charges that 40 percent of Bush's tax cut goes to the wealthiest 1 percent, and Bush denies it—by leaving his estate tax cut out of the calculation. Bush claims that Gore's prescription-drug plan would force Americans into a "government drug HMO" (i.e., Medicare), when it is actually Bush's proposals that would push the elderly to join HMOs. Bush says the "Senate budget committee" calculates that Gore's spending plans would send America back into deficit, when the calculation comes only from committee Republicans—independent analysts generally view Bush's tax cuts as far more costly.

If the media notes these inaccuracies at all, it treats them as intellectual lapses rather than ethical ones. But doesn't a man who asks for public power and public trust have a moral obligation to be intelligent about public issues? In Texas, after all, Bush's lack of understanding of, or engagement with, the substance of governance has had unmistakable moral effects. After six years as governor, he seems only dimly aware of the appalling quality of legal representation for his state's poor. When asked on "Meet the Press" why he vetoed a bill to require Texas courts to appoint a public defender within 20 days of a defendant's arraignment, Bush said he couldn't remember the legislation. In the second debate, when Gore said Bush used Texas's surplus to provide oil producers with a tax break rather than poor children with health coverage, Bush didn't rebut the charge. Instead, he denounced Gore for implying that "I'm a hard-hearted person." But the point was that a politician's values are only discernible through their application in policy. Moral action takes knowledge and effort; intention is not enough. The Texas governor may genuinely believe that as president he would help America's poor and working-class citizens more than Gore would. The problem, as his feeble response to Gore's criticisms in the third debate made painfully clear, is that he does not understand the issues well enough to accurately judge.

Ultimately, this election may serve as a test of more than just post-cold-war America's policy direction. America faces a choice between a presidential candidate whose persona it enjoys but whose substance it doubts and a candidate whose persona makes it uncomfortable but whose substance is beyond dispute. Al Gore may not be the most charming man in politics, but on many of the critical questions of our time—from his warnings about global warming to his hostility to Slobodan Milosevic, from his insistence on deficit reduction to his support for welfare reform—he has not simply been right, he has been right before much of the rest of the political class even started paying attention. If he loses on November 7, it will not simply set America on an ideological course that we consider perilous and unworthy of our best traditions. It will be a sign that we are not living in a serious age. ■

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NOTEBOOK

SERVING IT UP: George W. Bush seems to have passed a threshold of sorts: He has repeated dishonest statistics about his tax cut so many times that not even his opponent bothers to challenge him anymore. The third and final presidential debate was a font of unrebutted tried-and-untruisms. "If you pay taxes, you're going to get a benefit," Bush said. Actually, most taxpayers who pay payroll taxes but don't earn enough to pay income taxes don't get a tax cut from Bush. He repeated various statistics purporting to show that the rich would pay a higher percentage of taxes after his tax cut is implemented—figures derived only by ignoring his plan to abolish the estate tax, which overwhelmingly benefits the well-to-do. And Bush trotted out once more his favorite example of a person who would benefit from his tax cut—a single mother earning $22,000 per year. Trouble is, Bush's single mom would get, at most, $120 in tax cuts under his plan. Last week, *The Washington Post* brought this up with Larry Lindsey, Bush's chief economic adviser. According to the *Post*, Lindsey replied that the point of Bush's tax cut is to assist the single mother if she gets a $5,000 raise. OK, but then she wouldn't be making $22,000 per year any longer. And, depending on her financial particulars, her Bush tax cut could go back down to nothing. Maybe Bush needs to start talking about the single mom who inherits a multimillion-dollar estate.

LET'S TRADE WITH IRAQ!: It wasn't just his tax cut that tripped Bush up in the third debate. Practically dubbed the next Metternich after the second debate, Bush showed in the third that foreign affairs still often remain, well, foreign. In response to a question about what he would do to help family farmers, Bush confidently took off in a foreign policy direction, responding: "I don't want to use food as a diplomatic weapon from this point forward. We shouldn't be using food. It hurts the farmers. It's not the right thing to do." All of which sounds good. Except that the United States doesn't use food as a weapon anymore. In 1981, Ronald Reagan repealed the grain embargo against the Soviet Union.

VINT'S WEEK

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Last year, the Clinton administration decided to exempt the commercial sale of food (along with medicine and medical supplies) from all unilateral sanctions. And, just in case there was any doubt, on October 18, as part of this year's $78 billion agriculture spending bill, Congress codified the repeal of food sanctions against Cuba, Libya, Iran, North Korea, and Sudan. President Clinton has said he'll sign the bill. American farmers are now allowed to sell their food to every country in the world. Even Iraq is able to buy food from the United States. To be sure, its purchases are currently limited by the United Nations' oil-for-food program. But evidently not for long if foreign affairs maven George W. Bush wins the Oval Office.

BLOOD IS THICKER THAN WATER: This week's Million Family March in Washington featured all sorts of odd and unsavory characters with agendas bizarrely unrelated to the march's stated purpose: promoting the American family. Former Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega touted his recent peace tour of Africa. An American Indian named Chief Ernie Longwalker groused about the evils of education. And Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan touched on all the big issues: the Masons, perpendicular angles, and the freezing point of water. But no one was more out of place on the speakers' dais than a woman named Jewel Howard Taylor, who, in her words, was there to deliver a message "as simple as truth, as relevant as time, and as old as mankind." The message? "That you gathered here today stretch forth your hands in the spirit of true love, unity, peace, reconciliation, truth, and goodwill toward all human beings." Which might not sound like that odd a message—until you consider the messenger. Jewel Howard Taylor is the wife of Liberian dictator Charles Taylor, a man who, after systematically butchering his way to power in his own country, has for the last few years sponsored the mass atrocities against civilians in neighboring Sierra Leone. In fact, had the march been held a week later, the Liberian first lady wouldn't have even been allowed into the country, to say nothing of speaking at the Capitol. As Clinton announced on October 11, "I have signed a proclamation suspending the entry into the United States ... of all persons ... who plan, engage in, or benefit from activities that ... impede the peace process in Sierra Leone. These visa restrictions will apply immediately to President Charles Taylor, senior members of the government of Liberia, their closest supporters, and their family members." How nice that Mrs. Taylor got in just under the wire.

RICE TO THE BOTTOM: And why were those new sanctions against Taylor and Co. announced last Wednesday? Because that was the day Susan Rice, assistant secretary of state for African affairs, had to face a Senate subcommittee for the first time since the hideous, U.S.-crafted Lomé peace deal for Sierra Leone fell apart. Rice's entire performance was remarkable, but two moments stand out. First, when asked about the State Department's role in getting Massachusetts to drop criminal charges against Charles Taylor stemming from his 1985 escape from a prison there, Rice answered, "I don't think the State Department played a role." Not according to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As the commonwealth's October 1998 official notice of intent not to prosecute the Liberian warlord makes clear, "[T]he State Department has requested ... that this charge be dismissed against Charles Taylor." Even worse was Rice's abject refusal to own up to America's wildly immoral policy in Sierra Leone. While she conceded that the most disgraceful aspects of the Lomé peace deal—like blanket amnesty and high-level government posts for the serial mutilators in Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front—did not look good in hindsight, she insisted that they made sense at the time. The United States' role in Sierra Leone, declared Rice, "is one for which we do not have any regrets." If only the people of Sierra Leone felt the same way.

Move Over, Tina Brown

Basketball

Iverson Will Edit

Allen Iverson will take steps to eliminate offensive lyrics from the final version of his rap album.

LOOK WHO'S TALKING: "Well, there might have been defeat for Gore on the likability factor.... [H]e returned to his super-aggressive style, where he interrupted, he tried to get the last word, he broke the rules."—Bob Novak, commenting on CNN following the third presidential debate, October 17

BUT WILL IT PICK UP?: "This election's going to come down to the campaign that's got the most active grassroots organization—that campaign that can convince people to take the extra step, phone the extra phone, find that extra neighbor to take to the polls."—Bush, addressing a campaign rally in Little Rock, Arkansas, October 16

IN TEXAS, WE JUST STAY SICK: "It's one thing about insurance, that's a Washington term."—Bush, speaking about health care in the third presidential debate, October 17

THERE REALLY IS A DIFFERENCE: "If I'm the president, we're going to have emergency room care, we're going to have gag orders."—Bush, third debate, October 17

SERIOUS BUSINESS: "Please, don't kill me."—Bush, parodying condemned murderer Karla Faye Tucker (since executed) in an interview with *Talk*, September 1999

"[G]uess what: The three men who murdered James Byrd? Guess what's gonna happen to them: They're gonna be put to death.... It's gonna be hard to punish them any worse after they get put to death.... [W]e can't enhance the penalty any more than putting those three thugs to death. And that's what's gonna happen in the state of Texas."—Bush, second debate, October 11

"The death penalty is very serious business.... I take my job seriously. And if you think I was proud of it, I think you misread me."—Bush, third debate, October 17 ■

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Jerusalem Dispatch

Battle Plans

By Peter Hirschberg

The ink was not yet dry on this week's cease-fire agreement at Sharm El-Sheikh when some Palestinian groups said they would not abide by it and violence broke out again in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Some diplomats still stuck to the old line: There is no alternative to peace. But the grim reality in Israel and the Palestinian territories is that the political debate is now less about how to revive the peace process than about the various scenarios for war. At present, there are four.

Low-burn warfare. The first scenario represents only a half-step from where we are today. In it, Yasir Arafat continues to wage a low-grade war against Israel. Each day brings new mass protests in the West Bank and Gaza, with Palestinian youths hurling rocks and Molotov cocktails at Israeli soldiers and sporadic gun battles between Palestinian police and Israeli troops. Roads in the West Bank and Gaza become impassable, with Palestinian gunmen ambushing Jewish settlers—or maybe resorting to Hezbollah-style roadside bombs—as Palestinian militias, armed with automatic weapons, fire on Jewish settlements. Hamas suicide bombers infiltrate Israeli cities.

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

In such a scenario, Israel's instinct would be to contain the violence—relying on rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse protesters but deploying snipers to eliminate Palestinian gunmen. Israel would dispatch undercover units to snatch leading Palestinian militants, while launching air strikes on targets like Palestinian police barracks or the Palestinian airport in Gaza. It would also implement economic sanctions, barring Palestinian workers from crossing its borders. That could mean closing the Oasis Casino in Jericho, which hundreds of Israelis frequent nightly and which has become a steady source of income for the Palestinian Authority. Israel might also continue to encircle Palestinian cities with tanks, blocking any movement between them and maybe even cutting off the supply of electricity. But Israel would find it difficult to maintain such a siege, particularly as food and medicine shortages would spark massive international condemnation.

Unilateral moves. If the violence escalates, or even just continues, Arafat may use it as a pretext to unilaterally declare statehood, hoping that most countries—except the United States, of course—would immediately recognize his fledgling state. Already, Israeli military officials are convinced that Arafat prefers to forge an independent Palestinian state through blood and fire rather than at the negotiating table.

Arafat's primary problem would be that just 13 percent of the West Bank is under full Palestinian control. A full 60 percent is still under Israeli control; another 27 percent is under mixed Israeli-Palestinian control. In addition, such unilateral action would invite unilateral countermeasures from Israel. In mid-October, Ehud Barak vowed to pursue a policy of "unilateral separation" if Arafat proved a less-than-full "peace partner." That would likely mean establishing provisional borders in the areas still under Israeli control, building fences where possible and stationing large concentrations of troops and tanks in areas where fences cannot be erected. Israel would also move to secure control of West Bank water resources, and it might close the "safe passage" route through Israel that links Gaza and the West Bank for Palestinian commuters.

Israel might even retake small pieces of Arafat-controlled territory—for example, an elevated swath of terrain that overlooks a major traffic artery—though it's highly unlikely that the Israeli Defense Force would try to reinvade Palestinian cities. A few years ago, the military simulated just such an invasion—aptly named Field of Thorns—and determined that the IDF could rapidly retake Palestinian cities but that the ensuing house-to-house battles would kill hundreds of Israeli soldiers and thousands of Palestinians, both armed and civilian. Besides, an invasion of Palestinian cities might invite international intervention—on Arafat's behalf.

All-out war. None of the potential interveners—Jordan, Syria, and Egypt—relish the prospect. In fact, even the cur-

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rent level of Palestinian violence scares moderate Arab leaders like Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah, since it sparks angry street demonstrations in their own countries that could quickly turn against them. According to some published reports, Mubarak made at least a dozen calls to Arafat in the 48 hours before the Sharm El-Sheikh conference just to ensure the Palestinian leader showed up.

But if Palestinian casualties continue to mount and Israel again bombs Palestinian Authority targets, Egypt and Jordan might impose diplomatic sanctions on Israel, scaling down their diplomatic representation and maybe even recalling their ambassadors. Egypt will not act impulsively: It did not break off ties when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 and recalled its ambassador only after the Sabra and Shatilla massacre that year. Still, if Israel launched sustained aerial attacks on Palestinian targets or reinvaded Palestinian-controlled territory and casualties rose sharply, Egypt might feel obliged to act. Mubarak could send tanks into the Sinai, violating the peace treaty with Israel that marks the desert as a demilitarized zone. That would provoke an Israeli response, probably a deployment of its own tanks—creating an environment where fighting could break out. (The Israelis take the possibility seriously: They've incorporated it into military exercises for the last four years.)

More likely instigators, though, are Iraq and Iran, or Iranian-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon. Saddam Hussein moved a division toward the Iraqi border with Jordan in mid-October, while Hezbollah has been doing its best to aggravate Israel, kidnapping three Israeli soldiers and this week grabbing an Israeli citizen traveling abroad. Were Israel to hit Hezbollah targets in Lebanon, the Shi'ite movement could unleash a barrage of Katyusha rockets on northern Israel. There would be pressure on Barak to hold Lebanon's patron, Syria, accountable—and the result could be aerial attacks on Syrian military targets inside Lebanon.

The Lebanon nightmare. But if Israel has to worry about Arafat being buttressed from abroad, it also has to worry about him losing his grip on power at home. During the latest wave of hostilities, maverick militias have emerged in some West Bank cities. One such group is the Tanzim, a Fatah militia, which renounced the Sharm El-Sheikh agreement almost as it was being announced and vowed to continue fighting.

IF THE PALESTINIAN Authority implodes, several militias—including Hamas, the Tanzim, and the various Palestinian security forces—might each try to grab a different piece of Palestinian territory. They would battle Israel and maybe even each other. Israeli leaders refer to this as the "Lebanonization" of the conflict—a nightmarish scenario in which no central power is accountable, which further complicates both reprisal and peacemaking. And it would be only a matter of time before the fighting drew in Jewish settlers. The latest clashes have already produced at least one pitched gun battle between Palestinians and settlers. If attacks took a large toll on isolated settlements deep inside densely populated Palestinian areas, the government would probably try evacuating them. Of course, when Barak raised exactly this idea in a recent meeting with the settler leadership, it was summarily rejected.

Return to negotiation. There is one last scenario, which, if it doesn't constitute peace, at least doesn't constitute war. Since Camp David-style "end of conflict" negotiations—and with them any discussions about the future of Jerusalem—won't resume soon, if ever, the stakes for negotiations are much lower. The most hopeful possibility is a cooling-off period followed by talks of much more modest scope. The goal might be a long-term interim agreement, in which issues like authority over the Temple Mount and the return of refugees are put aside and the two sides work to build security arrangements that prevent hostilities from once again flaring out of control. Not that big an achievement—until you consider scenarios one through four. ■

Will Nader cost Gore the election?

Altered States

By MICHAEL CROWLEY

AND SO IT comes down to this: a three-week, neck-and-neck sprint to November 7. The election would seem to hinge on a couple of basic questions. Will voters find Al Gore more irritating than they find George W. Bush dim? Will they prefer tax cuts to new spending?

Or maybe: Does Ralph Nader want to torpedo Gore more than Pat Buchanan wants to torpedo Bush? It certainly looks that way. Because Bush and Gore are so close, the Green and Reform Party nominees both have a chance to swing important states, and maybe even the election. But only one of them seems inclined to do so. Buchanan is spending what's left of his $12.6 million matching-fund windfall almost exclusively in states where the outcome is already certain—and as a result will probably have no impact on the race's final electoral tally. Nader, by contrast, is trying to harvest votes in many of the toss-up states where the next president will likely be chosen. "We now have a dozen to fifteen states that are too close to call," says pollster John Zogby. "And in many of those Nader is polling either the difference or close to the difference."

Both Nader and Buchanan say they are focused on winning the 5 percent of the popular vote needed to secure federal election funds in 2004. But only Buchanan seems to have adopted a strategy explicitly geared toward this goal. As he explained to Reuters earlier this month, "We plan to use most of our $12 million that's left to go into these states with radio ads, which say, in effect ... 'The race in your state ... is over. Bush has written it off ... therefore a vote for Bush ... is a wasted vote. So take this opportunity in this one-party state to help create a new fighting conservative party, which will fight in these states.'" Accordingly, Buchanan has targeted such liberal blowout states as Massachusetts, Connecticut,

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New York, Rhode Island, and Minnesota. Two of his new radio ads are even crafted specifically for states that one major candidate already has in the bag: In Alaska (where Bush is up by 20 points), a Buchanan spot attacks "Beltway bureaucrats" who restrict oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; in Vermont (Gore, by 14 points), an ad denounces the state's law allowing gays and lesbians to form civil unions. While Buchanan has done some campaigning in swing states like Wisconsin and Pennsylvania (and has a campaign stop planned in Florida later this week), he has put the bulk of his advertising in California, which Gore is winning comfortably. And, since Buchanan almost certainly draws more voters from Bush, every dollar he spends in a state that's not in play helps the guys in Austin.

Nader's campaign, by contrast, seems to have it in for the vice president. While Buchanan and Nader have both repeatedly said Gore and Bush are so awful that it doesn't matter which of them wins, Nader has gone further, suggesting on more than one occasion that he might actually *prefer* to see Gore lose. "I remember how Jim Watt, the Reagan administration's interior secretary, galvanized the environment movement," Nader told *The New York Times*' Gail Collins, pushing the at best dubious theory that a Bush victory would galvanize a national progressive movement.

As if to test his hypothesis, Nader keeps returning to states that his candidacy could tip to Bush. To be sure, he too has been cherry-picking voters in noncompetitive states like Texas, where he traveled this week on a "Don't Waste Your Vote" tour. But even as Gore battled to overtake Bush in Florida last week, for example, Nader made several campaign stops there. The most recent major poll conducted in Florida showed Gore clutching a two-point lead, with Nader getting 3 percent of the vote—enough to tilt the state solidly toward Gore.

Nader has also vigorously courted lefty voters in the Pacific Northwest, where Washington and Oregon's 18 electoral votes hang in the balance. In late September, nearly 10,000 lefties filled a Seattle stadium for an all-star Nader rally where local legend Eddie Vedder of Pearl Jam stirred up anti-corporate sentiment with acoustic protest songs and taunts of Bill Gates. In August, another huge throng attended a Nader rally in Portland. Nader's efforts may be keeping Bush's hopes alive in these states. Oregon polls show Gore and Bush essentially tied, with Nader registering an impressive 6 to 8 percent. In Washington, a state even Michael Dukakis carried, Gore is up by only two points, in part because Nader is claiming about 5 percent.

Then there are the Midwestern battleground states, where most analysts believe the election will be decided. In Michigan, polls show Bush and Gore in a dead heat, with Nader—who has spent several days touring the state this fall—pulling 2 percent. Nader also campaigned this month in Wisconsin, where Gore leads but Bush still has an outside chance thanks to Nader's many fans in Madison. ("My neighborhood has more yard signs up for Nader than for Gore or Bush," says David Canon, a political science professor at the University of Wisconsin.) And, just as a new poll this week showed the race tightening in New Jersey, who should make an appearance in Princeton? Nader.

Nader often denies he is stealing votes from Gore, claiming that he is rallying people who would otherwise not vote at all.

ROBERT GROSSMAN

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Where We Stand

A commentary on public education and other critical issues

Stark Differences

By SANDRA FELDMAN, President
American Federation of Teachers

I'm amazed at some of the remarks I'm hearing about George W. Bush and Al Gore. Comments like, "Where's the choice? They're both moderates, aren't they?" Yet, the policy differences between the two candidates are so stark that the direction America takes will be vastly different depending on the choice we make on November 7. Look at what they are proposing for education.

Al Gore wants to build on the changes we've made in the past eight years. We have come a long way, and we still have a long way to go before every child gets a top-notch education. But student achievement is up in urban districts where it was flat for years. The high-school graduation rate is higher than ever—and, for the first time, equally high for African Americans. Gore wants the federal government to carry on its work as a partner with states and districts by supporting programs that are getting results and investing in new programs where they are needed.

Thank Gov. White, not Gov. Bush

Bush likes to take credit for a "Texas miracle" in education, but Texas is simply reaping the rewards of the 1984 reforms led by Gov. Mark White (who passed a huge tax package to pay for them). In fact, the education policies Bush advocates as a presidential candidate contradict the ones that worked so well in Texas.

Consider accountability in the schools. Bush talks a lot about it, but the accountability he calls for is tantamount to punishment. He proposes taking money away from failing schools instead of investing in reforming them. He should have learned a different lesson from the Texas reform program, which gave extra dollars to assist at-risk schools and required schools to provide special help for students who were falling behind. But now vouchers are Bush's answer to failing schools—though he avoids using the "v" word.

Gore believes in real accountability—he proposes closing down consistently low-performing schools and getting rid of poor teachers—but he is smart enough to see that you have to help schools raise student achievement before you zap them for failing to do so. We're already seeing how the thousands of qualified new teachers, hired under a program pioneered by the current administration, have enabled schools to lower class size. Gore will fight to extend the program because, as research proves, children—and especially poor, minority children—learn better in smaller classes.

Voters who think we have no clear choice are just plain wrong.

George Bush is not proposing smaller class size—even though it was another feature of the 1984 Texas school reform. And one of his own initiatives as governor of Texas will lower teacher quality instead of raising it: Schools are to be allowed to hire teachers who take no exam to certify their competence—or even people who took an exam and failed.

Gore and Bush hold sharply contrasting positions on other important education issues, too. Al Gore knows that a good preschool program can make the difference between success and failure in first grade and on through school—especially for poor, minority youngsters—and he is committed to a plan that would make high-quality preschool a reality for *all* four-year-olds. George W. Bush is silent on the issue.

Gore says that children should not be going to school in decaying buildings. That's why he is firmly behind a proposal to help school districts build or renovate 6,000 schools across the country. Bush, on the other hand, scoffs at the idea of federal help for school districts to fix their crumbling schools.

Needed Programs vs. Small Tax Cuts

With all of the programs Gore proposes, he still sets aside money from the projected budget surplus to ensure the stability of the Social Security trust fund and improve Medicare and to pay off the national debt. The big savings we realize on interest payments can be spent on more useful things.

By contrast, Bush puts tax cuts at the top of his agenda. He cut state funding for teachers' pensions in order to finance a tax cut in Texas. Now, he proposes to squander a big chunk of the surplus on a tax cut that will give more to the wealthiest Americans than to all his other programs combined. If the surplus is used for a massive tax cut, instead of investing it in ways that will continue to propel our nation forward—like education—we could be in for a bad jolt.

Al Gore and George W. Bush stand for two very different views of government, and of America's future. The choice is a real one; let's choose wisely. ▮

Where We Stand **is published once every month in *The New Republic*. To comment, write to Sandra Feldman, AFT, 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20001.** **© Sandra Feldman 2000.** **Visit our web site (http://www.aft.org).**

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But it's an argument that doesn't have much empirical support. Zogby, for example, estimates that at least 60 percent of Nader's supporters would otherwise vote for Gore. Those voters would be enough to take Oregon off the table, ensure Gore victories in Wisconsin and Washington state, and significantly improve the vice president's chances in Michigan and Florida.

Doesn't Nader know that going after votes in the very states where Bush and Gore are pouring in millions makes it harder for him to get the 5 percent the Green Party needs to receive federal matching funds next time around? Probably. But the truth is that Nader doesn't care about the 5 percent as much as Buchanan does. Buchanan is a perennial candidate looking for a megaphone. When it became clear no one was paying attention to him in the GOP primary, he bolted to a party that opposed many of his cherished social conservative principles, because it had $12 million in matching funds for him to play with. Nader, too, could have sought the Reform Party millions (some party leaders begged him to), but he instead stuck with the Greens, who have no matching funds but do have an agenda in which he believes. What really drives Nader is not money but ideological purity, which is why he doesn't mind taking Gore down. Is that nobler? Depends how worried you are by the prospect of four years of George W. Bush. ■

Why Big Pharm should love a drug benefit.

Old News

By GREGG EASTERBROOK

POLITICIANS UNVEIL A federal plan to help pay medical expenses for millions of American seniors. "No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine," says one. But big medical interests fight the proposal tooth and nail, spending tens of millions of dollars on lobbying, ad campaigns, and phony "grassroots" groups. The program, industry spokesmen warn, "will create an enormous and unpredictable burden on every working taxpayer."

This year's attempt by pharmaceutical companies to block a federal prescription-drug benefit for seniors? Actually, no. The politician was Lyndon Johnson; the big interest, the American Medical Association; and the reform, Medicare, which Johnson signed into law on July 30, 1965. Doctors' lobbies once fought as fervently against federal insurance benefits for seniors as pharmaceutical companies fight a prescription-drug benefit today.

Yet since 1965 the AMA has become so Medicare-friendly that it now sometimes offers suggestions on how to preserve—and even extend—the program. Far from undermining physicians' incomes and seniors' health, as the AMA predicted, Medicare did exactly the opposite. By providing doctors with an ever-larger pool of patients able to afford treatment, Medicare has contributed to 35 years of improving health for seniors and increasing salaries for doctors. All of which raises a question: Will the drug companies someday reverse themselves on prescription-drug benefits as completely as the AMA has on Medicare?

THE SIMILARITIES ARE striking. The AMA fought Medicare-style proposals from the 1940s on, claiming they constituted socialized medicine and would destroy clinical practice. In 1958, as political support for insuring seniors grew stronger, the AMA ratcheted up its lobbying campaign, creating the Joint Council to Improve the Health Care of the Aged. The council represented an innovation that has since become a Washington standby: the organization that appears to advocate grassroots reform but is actually an industry mouthpiece designed to preserve the status quo.

After John F. Kennedy was elected and endorsed Medicare, the AMA's effort shifted into high gear. The physicians' lobby aired TV ads predicting woe for patients if Medicare were enacted. The AMA's simulated grassroots campaigns (which went by names such as Operation Coffee Cup and Operation Hometown) asked seniors to write Congress denouncing reform efforts. The organization set up an anti-Medicare speakers' bureau and liberally donated to anti-Medicare members of Congress. AMA officials called Medicare "the most deadly challenge ever faced by the medical profession."

Behind doctors' terror was the fear that once Washington involved itself in the insurance business, legislators would inevitably put pressure on the fees physicians could charge. As AMA President Dr. Norman Welch testified at a 1964 House hearing, "it is axiomatic . . . that control follows money when the government steps in." Welch wasn't wrong. Medicare did, in fact, lead government to involve itself in many aspects of medicine, including pricing. Since the Reagan administration, for instance, the Health Care Financing Administration has effectively compelled hospitals to treat most elderly patients for lump-sum payments, forced physicians to reduce most fees charged for office visits, and tried to entice seniors into Medicare-financed HMO plans.

Yet who can argue with the overall result? Before Medicare, physicians and hospitals had to treat many senior citizens as charity cases—or seniors suffered without care. Now, all aging patients can pay for treatment, and they are physicians' most frequent customers. Seniors have grown steadily healthier, living longer with less pain and a higher quality of life. Even in a cost-conscious environment, expensive procedures, such as heart bypass operations, are now universally approved for payment for those over 70 years old and ever more effective. And doctors keep prospering. Since Medicare went into effect, mean U.S. physician income has risen 14 percent in real-dollar terms to $199,600. Despite stories suggesting that Medicare and managed care are forcing doctors out of their profession, the percentage of physicians in the general population keeps growing: When Medicare was enacted, there were 143 doctors per 100,000 Americans; today that figure has risen more than 75 percent to 260 per 100,000.

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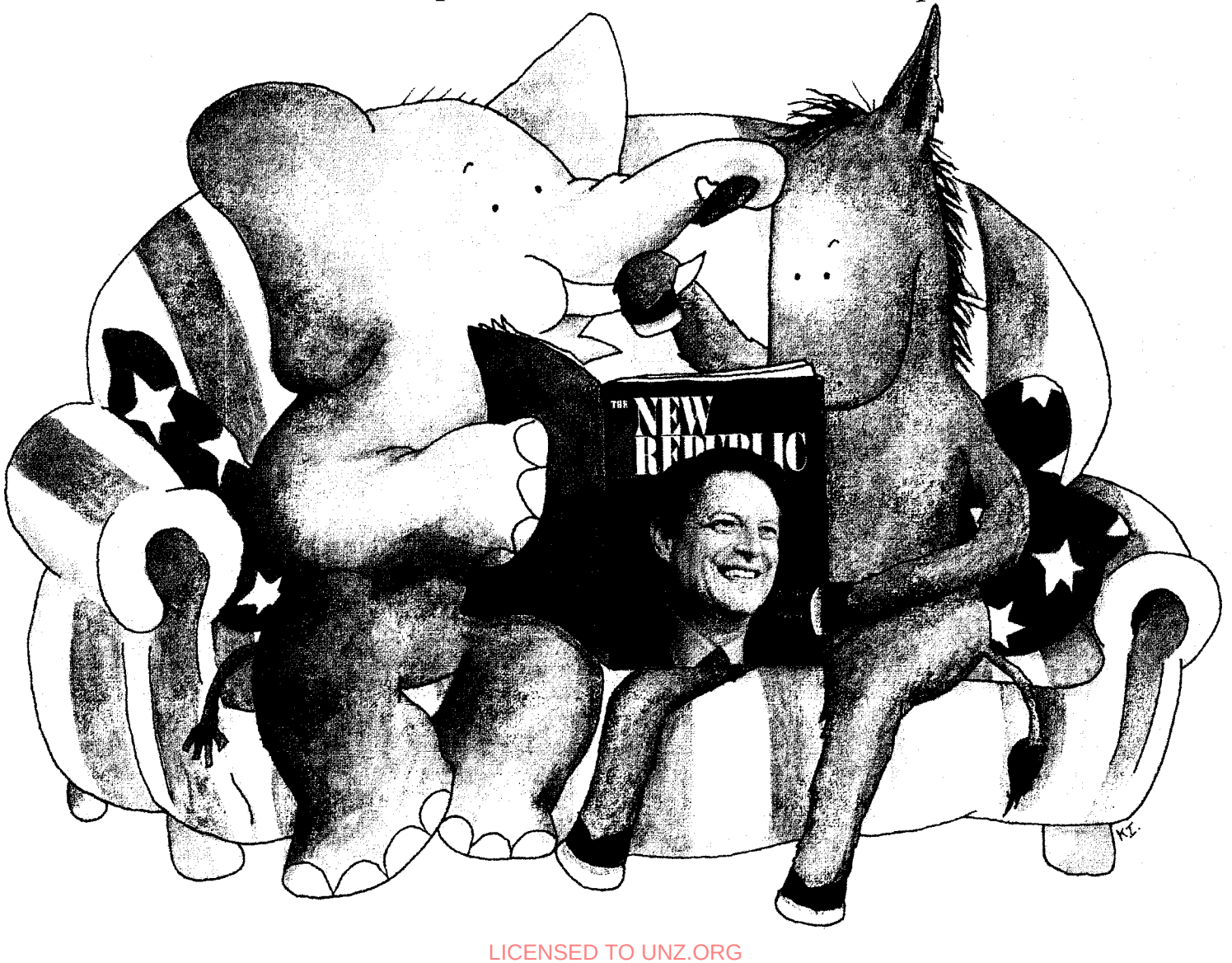

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Flash forward to the prescription-drug dispute, and the assumptions and dynamics are nearly identical. Drugmakers are terrified that a federal initiative to extend universal pharmaceutical insurance to seniors (whether Al Gore's Medicare-centered plan or George W. Bush's voucher-style program) will bring regulation and government pressure to lower prices. Drug companies spent an estimated $60 million in 1999 alone to oppose federal drug-coverage and drug-pricing legislation. The industry has created a front group, Citizens for Better Medicare, that appears to advocate reform but actually opposes it. It backs other groups, such as the Alliance for Better Medicare, that represent or seem to represent everyday people rising up in horror against the threat of someone helping pay their prescription bills. And the drug companies are donating money to politicians who oppose prescription benefits, while targeting those who support them.

Yet years from now pharmaceutical manufacturers may look back on the passage of a seniors' drug plan as the moment everyone in their primary customer base obtained the ability to pay for their products. Seniors, who generally require the most pills, are the best customers the drugmakers will ever have—and today more than 13 million seniors don't have any prescription benefits. Another roughly 25 million do have some drug coverage, but many of these plans offer only partial payment or cover only generic drugs, not top-shelf proprietary pharmaceuticals. Meanwhile, the percentage of the population that is elderly is rising, and the pharmaceutical industry continues to invent impressive drugs that alleviate suffering and improve quality of life but cost a pretty penny. Already prescription drugs for seniors constitute a roughly $40 billion market, and this figure will only get bigger.

Drug companies do have legitimate concerns about price-bashing by politicians. A modern drug costs, on average, $500 million to develop, and manufacturers need high-priced sales to justify that investment. Gore is particularly tortuous when he denounces drug companies as criminal price-gougers one day and the next promises that American research will cure cancer by designing miraculous substances nanotailored at the molecular level. You can't have space-age pharmaceutical research without paying for it. And it's true that countries like Canada offer lower pharmaceutical prices partly through a free-rider effect. Some 45 percent of the world's pharmaceuticals are developed in the United States; other nations then enjoy, at discounted prices, health-giving compounds that would not exist if Americans had not paid generously to develop them.

So pharmaceutical manufacturers do have reasons to insist that whatever national insurance initiative Congress eventually passes take their valid concerns into account. But in 1965 physicians thought a national insurance initiative would ruin their livelihoods, and instead their clinical concerns were taken into consideration—as evidenced by steadily better health outcomes—while their pocketbooks managed quite nicely. As long as any federally enacted drug plan for seniors is not designed to be anti-industry, there is no reason to assume it would undermine the bottom line.

Not only would a federal prescription-drug benefit for all seniors spawn another round of improvement in national health care, but pharmaceutical companies would also find, as physicians once did, that suddenly their entire over-65 customer base could pay for their products. One day soon, drug manufacturers may consider national drug coverage for seniors the best thing that ever happened to sales—and agitate for universal drug coverage for all citizens, just as the AMA now agitates for universal health insurance to pay doctors' fees. In fact, a prescription-drug benefit will raise the same question Medicare raised about health care in general: If all seniors deserve it, why don't all Americans? ■

The scam behind SAT-bashing.

Test Flight

By Marcia Yablon

In May, Mt. Holyoke College announced it was eliminating Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores from its admissions requirements. The 2,000-student women's college in western Massachusetts, explains Vice President for Enrollment Jane Brown, decided the test no longer fit the school's "philosophical point of view." Dropping the test, boasts Brown, will help Mt. Holyoke create a more "holistic approach" to student admissions—allowing prospective applicants to pursue a broad array of activities "rather than spending all their time, effort, money, and emotional resources" on prepping for the SAT. What's more, Brown worries that the SAT may be "inherently unfair," noting that low-income students, minorities, and women tend to perform worse on the test.

All of which may be true. But the timing of Mt. Holyoke's decision suggests another, less high-minded explanation for making the SAT voluntary: to boost Mt. Holyoke's standing in *U.S. News & World Report*'s all-important college rankings at a point when it had dipped to number 21, a five-year low.

It's the dirty little secret of competitive college admissions: Make the SAT optional, and your *U.S. News* ranking (which *The Washington Monthly* recently deemed "the most important arbiter of status in higher education") will almost certainly rise. Although *U.S. News* has been criticized for tinkering with the formula it uses to rank colleges, academic components such as SAT scores, acceptance rate, and high school class rank remain prominent factors in the calculation, accounting for roughly 10 percent of each school's total score. And making the SAT voluntary can increase all three. First, if the SAT is optional, only those students who feel they have strong scores will submit them, leading to an increase of as much as 100 points in a college's lowest scores. Additionally, if they don't need to take the

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SAT, more students will likely apply to the school, and thus a lower percentage will be admitted, which boosts a college's "selectivity" rating—another number factored into its ranking. Finally, the overall high school grade point average (and class rank) of incoming freshmen will also go up, as more students with high GPAs but low SATs apply. Bob Morse, director of data research for the *U.S. News* rankings, declines to discuss specifics but concedes the basic point: "Increasing a heavily weighted variable can have an impact.... If a school's academic profile improves enough, you can go up in the rankings."

TO BE SURE, some schools, like Sarah Lawrence College, have been SAT-optional since the 1970s, before rankings mattered. And many large state schools have made the test voluntary so that it's harder to prove that they're letting in minority students with lower scores—and thereby practicing potentially unconstitutional affirmative action. But the recent trend toward dropping the SAT requirement among small liberal arts colleges provides ample evidence of a rankings cause and effect. Take Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, which made the SAT optional in 1995. Since then, the school has seen a 60-point increase in its average SAT score, a 35 percent increase in applications, and a 25 percent increase in students from the top 10 percent of their high school classes. (In an August 28 *New York Times* op-ed, Robert Massa, the college's vice president for enrollment, proudly noted the "striking statistic" that when a school eliminates its SAT requirement, its average SAT score improves.) The year after Dickinson made the switch, it moved from *U.S. News*' good-but-not-great "Tier 2" category to the more impressive "Tier 1."

Nor is Dickinson's experience unusual. Maine's Bowdoin College dropped its SAT requirement and climbed two places in the rankings the next year. Connecticut College made the change that same year and entered *U.S. News*' coveted "top 25" for the first time in five years. In 1996, Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania followed suit and vaulted from the third tier to the second—where it has remained ever since.

In fact, while denying that rankings had anything to do with their own schools' decisions to drop the SAT requirement, college officials seem considerably less confident that their competitors' motivations were as pure. Mt. Holyoke's Jane Brown notes, "We talked to other institutions, and they did see their numbers increase." Gregory Goldsmith, director of admissions at Franklin and Marshall College, says his school, which made SATs optional in 1990, wasn't aware of the ratings-boosting effect when it made its decision but discovered it immediately afterward: "There was a direct benefit between the SAT policy and the average SAT.... Throwing out the low scores offset the real average." But he doubts other colleges that removed the test requirement were as innocent. "There is a lot of competition out there," he explains, and this is "a way for colleges to make their own profile look better."

One would think colleges that still mandate the SAT would publicly question the motives of the ones making it optional. After all, by comparison, it makes their rankings go down. But many feel that the schools dropping the SAT have already won the public relations war by labeling the test unfair to women and minorities. One high-ranking official at a school that still requires the test remarks that "the whole thing seems very convenient." He believes that colleges' decisions to drop the SAT—and the self-righteous rhetoric that accompanies them—are just a smoke screen "to hide the fact that [their SAT scores] are going down." Of course, they're not going down anymore. ■

Campaign Journal

Wafflers

By MICHELLE COTTLE

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

THE THIRD PRESIDENTIAL debate has just ended, and the 36 undecided voters gathered at the studios of KETC Channel 9 are ready for their close-ups. These undecideds—twelve leaning toward Al Gore, twelve toward George W. Bush, and twelve staunchly neutral—have been invited by Republican pollster Frank Luntz and MSNBC to give their verdicts (broadcast live across America) on the two candidates' performances. Before the cameras start rolling, Luntz does some last-minute pre-interviewing. Yeshai Gibli, an account executive who went into the debate leaning Gore, is among the first to venture his thoughts. "In the beginning," Gibli tells Luntz, "I thought Gore would be more liberal" on the death penalty. Similarly, on the issue of censorship, Gibli remarks, "[Gore] wasn't far enough to the left as he might be." So has Gore's centrism transformed Gibli into a fledgling Naderite? Not exactly. As Gibli tells Luntz, Gore's insufficient leftism has turned him into a *Bush* man.

And, within the ranks of undecided voters, Gibli is one of the smart ones. "The very fact that [the focus-group participants] volunteer makes them very abnormal," explains Ken Warren, a pollster and political science professor at St. Louis University. "They are much more confident, much more informed" than your run-of-the-mill undecided voter. "Most undecided voters aren't watching these debates," says Michael Haselswerdt, head of the political science department at Canisius College in Buffalo, New York. "To think that somebody who's really undecided at this point is spending an hour and a half on a nice fall evening to watch this—that's crazy."

But that hasn't stopped the media, the political consultants, and the candidates themselves from fetishizing wafflers into the biggest story of this election. Call them what you will—undecideds, uncommitteds, independents, swing voters—the folks who haven't yet made up their minds about how to vote on November 7 are the true bigwigs in this contest. The media treats them as if they were the oracle of Delphi. "Joining us now from Warren, Michigan, outside Detroit, our Wolf Blitzer is there with a group of undecided voters," chirped CNN's Judy Woodruff after

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STEPHEN SAVAGE

the St. Louis debate. "Wolf, we're dying to hear what they have to say." In the aftermath of the second debate, at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, *National Journal*'s *Hotline* ran words of wisdom from wafflers in focus groups throughout 21 states. Even the candidates celebrate indecisiveness as a virtue. "I can't think of a better place to have a good discussion about the future of the economy," Bush gushed upon his arrival in St. Louis. "After all, Missouri's what they call a swing state. It's a state where there's a lot of independent-minded people, a lot of people who want the measure of the man running."

No, they don't. These supposed supercitizens are actually the least-informed, least-politically-savvy, least-rational voters around. It's not that undecideds are inherently less intelligent than other voters—although surveys show they generally have lower levels of education, income, and political involvement. They're just totally clueless. Forget trying to explain to these people the differences between Bush's and Gore's Medicare plans: "When it comes to politics, [undecided voters] don't know *anything*," snorts Haselswerdt. "And they're not going to pay attention long enough to learn anything." Study after study confirms that your average waffler either doesn't understand or doesn't much care about our political system and thus winds up voting for whichever candidate gives her that warm and fuzzy feeling in the tummy. But that hasn't stopped political watchers from trailing around after these clueless hordes with their microphones and pencils poised, lapping up the wafflers' every incoherent, contradictory, and flat-out stupid statement as if they were transcribing the deep wisdom of the American soul.

There are a variety of reasons people tell pollsters they remain undecided at this late date. Some, for instance, feel their vote is a private matter, not to be shared with professional pulse-takers. Others—usually members of the upper middle class and predominantly women, according to Luntz—may be paying attention to the race but are conflicted about the candidates and their positions. For instance, says Warren, many traditionally Democratic union voters hate Gore for backing NAFTA and permanent normal trading relations with China.

But the bulk of undecideds are folks—again, mostly women—on the lower end of the socioeconomic and education scale. In general, they are completely uninterested in or outright disgusted with politics. "They don't follow politics at all and think ill of all candidates," says Luntz. Indeed, many of them won't even bother to go to the polls. "My experience with every election is that [undecideds] vote at lower rates than people with greater conviction," says Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center. Adds Warren: "They are the least committed to the system, the most apathetic, and the most uninterested in politics. That's exactly why they're not informed enough to have made a decision."

But most wafflers know it's not good form to tell pollsters that they couldn't care less about the campaign and are planning to spend Election Day watching reruns of "Matlock." So they almost invariably say they're looking for "more information." Before the Wake Forest debate, Lida Hayes, one of 30 focus groupies organized by Speakout.com and Fox News, said she was anxiously "waiting for more information" on the issues before making her pick. But when pushed on which issues, Hayes drew a complete blank. "I just want somebody to take a stand," she finally asserted with great intensity. I want at least one of them to stop going "back and forth" and to "get out of the gray area."

In fact, if the undecideds are paying attention at all, they're not looking for a fleshed-out explanation of the voucher mechanism in Bush's prescription-drug plan; they're trying to figure out which candidate is "the best person." When Luntz asked St. Louis focus groupie Walter Bettey why he thought Bush won the first two debates,

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The year 1513 – Machiavelli stated in *The Prince*:

> ***"If you do not intervene, you will remain the prey of the victor ... Princes who lack resolution take the path of neutralization in order to avoid a present danger and for the most part find it the path to ruin."***

1942 United States. *President Roosevelt, after being told by a Polish agent of the ongoing Hitler death camps, refuses to intervene to stop the attempted extermination of the Jews because of the Allies priorities (nation's strategic interest).*

1994 Rwanda. *President Clinton, after being told of the ongoing genocide (over 800,000 men, women and children murdered in 47 days), refuses to intervene to stop the attempted extermination of the Tutsis because of United States' priorities (national strategic interest).*

February 15, 2000, and October 11, 2000. Primary Debate with George W. Bush, John McCain, and Alan Keyes and Presidential Debate with George W. Bush and Al Gore.

In both debates it was stated in substance that a small outside force—perhaps as few as 5,000 troops could have stopped the slaughter in Rwanda in its early stages. The participants were asked if they as President would have intervened to stop the killing.

John McCain, Alan Keyes and Al Gore stated they would have intervened, with McCain saying "there were times when a violation of moral principles justified the commitment of troops."

George W. Bush stated he would not have intervened because it was not in the "national strategic interest" of the United States.

Would George W. Bush intervene to stop the killing of 800,000 men, women and children in 47 days in Sweden, Finland, Norway, Switzerland, New Zealand, Spain or Portugal?

What is different about Rwanda?

The *victors* (the next generation of Hitlers, Stalins, and Saddam Husseins), are watching and listening to determine what action of genocide they can take in the future. Who do you think they want to win the Presidential Election?

George W. Bush, like William Jefferson Clinton, is a *prey of the victor.*

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Bettey noted that Bush came across as "just a regular guy. It's like you can relate to him. He's not a politician." Similarly, focus groupies at the Wake Forest matchup generally led off by saying they were concerned about issues, only to start rambling about which candidate is more "honest" or "straightforward" and which has stronger "character" or "morals" or "backbone." In recalling the first debate, for instance, groupie Patricia Thorne (among others) dwelled on mannerisms and personality tics. "Gore, when speaking, tended to grimace," grimaced Thorne. "On the other hand, Bush looked too intense" when speaking. (Bush more intense than Gore? What debate was this woman watching?)

Of course, there may be another reason wafflers waffle: It makes them feel superior. Indeed, wafflers wear their undecided status like a badge of thoughtfulness. "I think it's sad that these people decided so early when they haven't seen the issues" laid out side by side in the debates, said Wake Forest groupie Rachel Mortick, a freshman at the university. (Of course, after the debate, Mortick claimed to have been won over by Bush's Social Security plan for the younger generation—which, I pointed out, he had barely mentioned that evening. "I know," she said with a sweet shrug and a smile.) "It's culturally preferential—except in Hollywood—to be not aligned," says Luntz, "because that suggests that you're smarter. It suggests you're an independent thinker. People say this to me—I get this all the time—'I don't vote based on party, I vote based on the candidate.'" Of course, says Luntz, if you ask them to run through their past voting records, oftentimes they're 90 percent Republican or 90 percent Democrat. "But society has taught them that independent thought is a good thing, not a bad thing."

With that sort of reinforcement, it's not surprising wafflers let their exalted indecision go to their heads. Indeed, before Luntz's third and final post-debate show begins, his 36 undecideds are downright blasé about their pending national TV appearance. Having stuffed themselves with Chex mix, cookies, and soda during the ten-minute break, they wander back into the studio and plop down in their chairs. The studio lights come on full blast, nearly blinding me as I stand off to one side, watching the group. But the participants sit blinking in the whiteness, smiling expectantly, chattering casually among themselves. No one seems concerned about making a fool of themselves or saying the wrong thing. And why should they? These people, after all, have their fingers on the pulse of the nation. ■

America's Iraq policy collapses.

Rollback

By LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN

"IF THEIR INTENTION was to deter us from our mission of promoting peace and security in the Middle East," President Clinton declared upon hearing of the terrorist attack against the USS *Cole* in Yemen last week, "they will fail, utterly." But, as it happens, the young sailors on the *Cole* died on a mission its architects themselves no longer believe in. When attacked, the ship was en route to the Persian Gulf to enforce America's policy of containment against Iraq—a policy that is leaking like a sieve.

There is, to begin with, the crumbling U.N. sanctions regime. Iraq currently exports more oil than any other country save Saudi Arabia, earns more from oil sales than it did prior to the embargo, and has been using those earnings to replenish its military arsenal. No one knows how fast that arsenal is growing because of the absence of U.N. weapons inspections, whose resumption the Clinton administration has blocked. Meanwhile, Saddam Hussein is fast being rehabilitated on the international scene. And, in recent months, emboldened Iraqi forces have violated the no-fly zone with impunity, test-launched missiles, and massed troops on their neighbors' borders. The Iraqi opposition, for its part, is weak and divided. Administration officials privately insist that these developments, though regrettable, are beyond their control. They're not. The truth is that Saddam didn't torpedo our Iraq policy; the White House did.

The story of containment's unraveling begins with a shift in American policy early last year. In 1997 and 1998, the United States responded to Saddam's refusal to submit to weapons inspections with repeated buildups of American power in the Persian Gulf. In the hope that simply wielding the "big stick" would bring the Iraqi dictator to his senses, the administration advertised in detail the comings and goings of American aircraft carriers and the movements—by quantity and type—of warplanes. And then, when it was actually time to use them, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan or President Clinton himself would devise a fig leaf to permit the United States to back down. Finally in December 1998, after Saddam's intransigence became too much to bear, the United States responded with a fusillade of missile strikes. But even then America's air campaign was severely limited in purpose, scope, duration, and effect.

The weakness of the Clinton administration's response sparked a torrent of Republican criticism, obliging the president to endure sustained public humiliation and utterly demoralizing his foreign policy team. With the aim of, as

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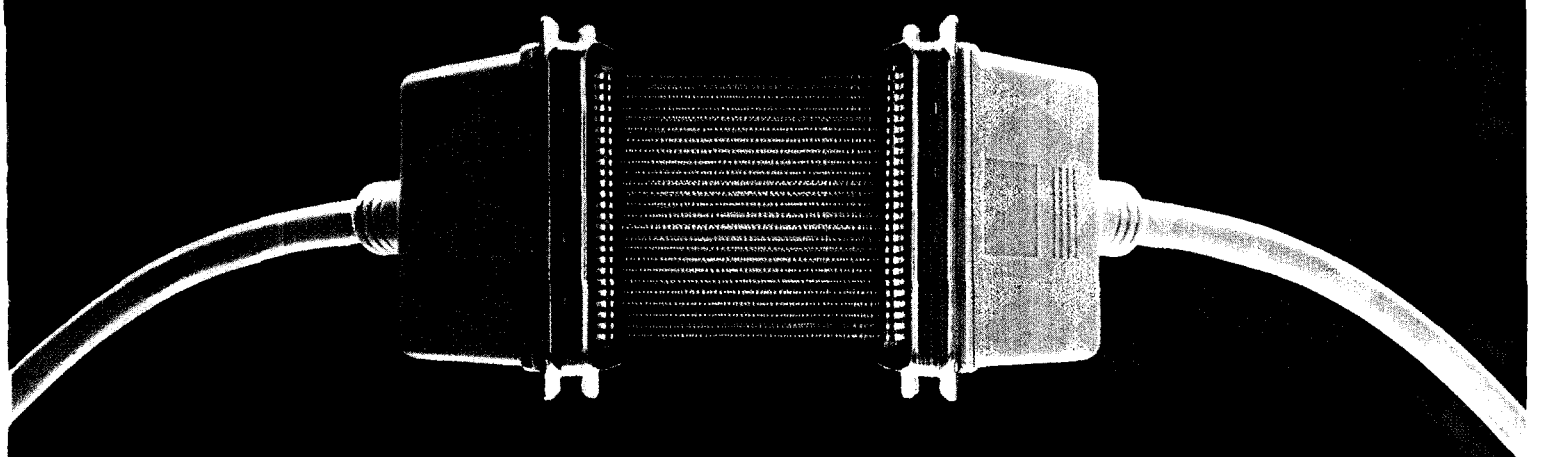

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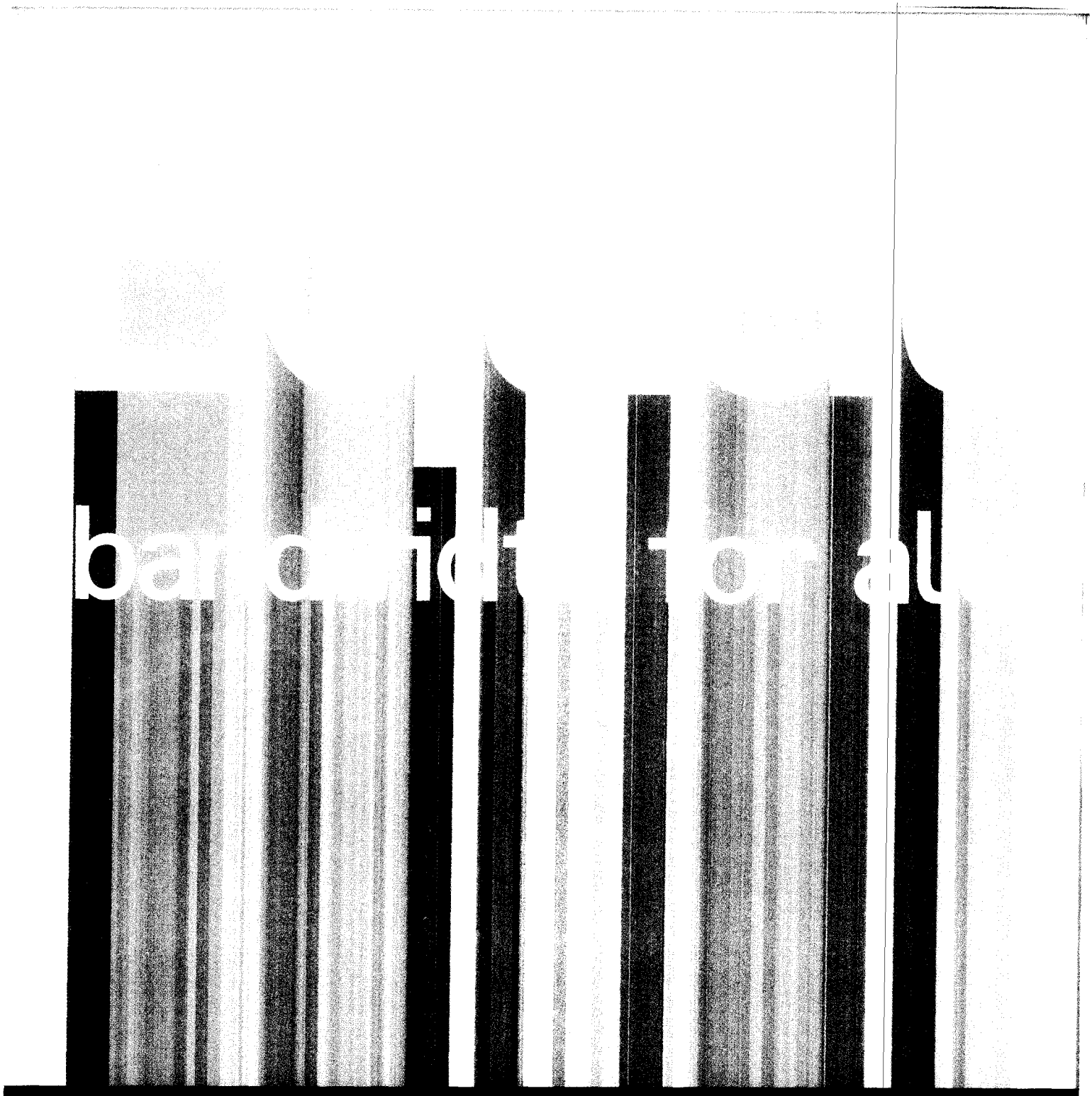

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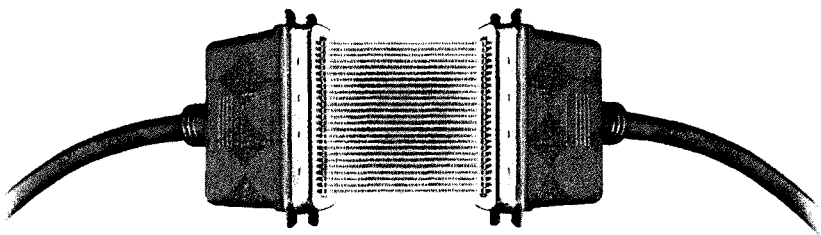

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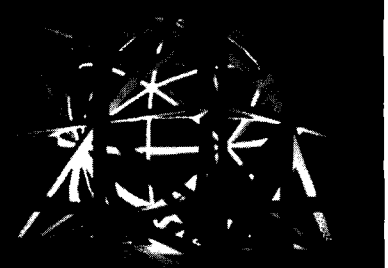

darin **barney**

"*Prometheus Wired* presents wonderfully lucid criticisms of actual sociotechnical institutions and their accompanying ideologies. As an alternative, Darin Barney argues a theoretically sophisticated, clearly intelligible, and practically useful counter-position, one that synthesizes some of the strongest elements in both conservative and left wing political thought. **I found it a joy to read.**"
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E-Moms Take Action

BY *Robin Tremblay-McGaw*

Photo by Lynne Olivier

A mother and part-time publicist home alone with her two preschool-age children turns on the television and is confronted by the unfolding drama of children being led across the street, away from their day camp in Granada, California, where earlier a lone gunman had opened fire. Soon after, she is on the telephone with other moms and friends around the country. They resolve to do something about the problem of gun violence in America, they create a website, and on Labor Day 1999, 25 women gather for a press conference in Manhattan. They apologize for not doing something sooner to stop gun violence and publicly launch the Million Mom March.

Just nine months later, on Mother's Day, May 14, 2000, more than 820,000 mothers and other citizens marched at the Capitol in Washington, D.C., and in cities across America, demanding sensible gun laws to create an America safe for kids. These moms and others reclaimed the holiday from its current consumer orientation and returned it to its roots in the nineteenth century, when women activists created Mother's Day as a day for marching for economic and social justice.

Just how were so many people across America mobilized so quickly to participate in the largest demonstration for gun control in America? The answer to that question is complex. Several ingredients—the tipping point of public outrage, one woman's motivation to do something to protect her own and others' children, women's increased political power, the access available via the Web and e-mail, and a good dash of media savoir-faire—played a role.

But one thing is certain: the Internet provided the power to fuel this movement at warp speed. Soon after she conceived the idea for the march, founder Donna Dees-Thomases worked with a young Internet boutique, Abstract Edge, to assemble a website in just eight days. The site (millionmommarch.org) became the movement's instant soapbox, national bulletin board, and revenue generator in the nine months leading up to the march. When asked why she created a website for the march, Dees-Thomases commented, "This march was truly a grassroots effort where moms and other volunteers got the word out about mobilizing for common-sense gun policy. Since we didn't have the funds to do this with other traditionally modern means like phone trees or faxing, the website became the key communications tool for the March."

The website made use of a clever branding strategy to communicate the march's platform of "sensible gun laws, safe kids." It included the humorous "apple pie award" and "time-out chair," devices, based on a familiar American symbol and a contemporary parenting technique, that enabled the organizers to publicly reward and castigate behavior and policy around the need for sensible gun laws. The website also allowed moms and others to register online to participate and to connect with their state and local march coordinators using e-mail and Web resources. It provided advocacy organizing manuals, local march information for all 50 states, press kits, advertisements and logos, and lists of march supporters and endorsers; Million Mom March t-shirts were offered for sale. Additionally, the site solicited online contributions and enabled people to make a donation in the name of a child through the "Registry of Protected Children."

Finally, the Million Mom March website also included the interactive "Tapestry of Woven Words" which enabled moms and others to share their thoughts and feelings about the horror of gun violence and their commitment to making change. As Eric Paley, Abstract Edge's CEO, said, "The site was not simply a forum for sharing. It gave form to the sharing. The intention was to connect emotionally with people who visit the site." And connect they did; the website received more than five million hits during the week preceding the March.

Grassroots movements are historically based on shared concerns and on connections, the kind of connections made in person. The power of the Internet to help hook up like-minded individuals who might never meet one another otherwise and mobilize them to act with a powerful and united voice, as demonstrated by the Million Mom March, is enormous. The old adage that all politics is local takes on new meaning. With the aid of the Internet, local means the proximity of shared values, interests, and goals, not just geography.

The always-on Internet, connecting some 76 million Americans, fueled a movement based on shared concerns about the availability of guns in our country and the damage—both physical and emotional—they cause. We know that as of the first quarter of 2000, there were, for the first time, more women online than men. Working moms, stay-at-home moms, and others with access to the Internet were able to participate in the march on their own terms. For some, that involvement was late in the evening, after the children were in bed. No longer was participation predicated on being available solely during traditional business hours. Connection, organizing, and change could occur quickly, fairly inexpensively, and at any time of day. Perhaps some of the increase of women online is a result of the incredible number of women and others participating in the Million Mom March via the Internet.

Now that this event is over, marchers are still using e-mail and the Million Mom March website to organize a movement to hold legislators accountable for the paucity of sensible gun policies in our country. Since the Million Mom March has joined with The Bell Campaign and become the Million Mom March and Million Mom March Foundation, members are wired into a powerful organizational infrastructure that is building more than 200 Million Mom March Chapters across the country. Using the website, people can become members, locate their local chapter, download an application to start a chapter, identify their federal and state legislators and write to those legislators, track pertinent gun legislation, and more. In this movement, moms and others not only need a room of their own—it also helps to have a computer and an Internet connection.

ROBIN TREMBLAY-MCGAW *is director of information services for the Million Mom March and a writer whose other work includes poetry, writing on information specialists in advocacy organizations, and essays on literature and art.*

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AOL, Time Warner, AT&T, and other media giants want to be our Digital Landlords. They are planning the Internet's future, and remember – profit, not open access, is their primary concern.

"Open access" is simply our freedom to roam the Internet at will – the very thing that makes the Internet so revolutionary, and such a powerful engine for innovation.

Today that freedom to surf is protected, since most Internet users connect through telephone lines, and telephone companies are not allowed to dictate how we surf or where we go on the web.

But soon most Internet users will connect through high-speed cable, the same cable that brings TV into our homes. The open access rules that govern telephone companies, however, don't apply to cable owners. No wonder the Digital Landlords are buying up all the cable systems.

With cable-based Internet service, the Digital Landlords can manipulate our access to the Internet to their own profitable advantage. They can filter content and block competing web sites, expediting connections to their business partners while impeding access to independent information and service providers – *especially those they might find disagreeable for any commercial or political reason.*

Consumers Union, the Consumer Federation of America, Media Access Project, and others are urging the government to apply open access rules to cable owners. Some want the pending merger of AOL and Time Warner stopped unless open access is required. The Digital Landlords are pouring cash into Washington to fend off such regulation.

"Exchanging open access for manipulated and filtered access may be good for corporate profits, but it's a lousy deal for Internet users," says Jeffrey Chester of the Center for Media Education (www.CME.org). "Now is the time for people who value unfettered Internet access to register their opinion."

The ACLU offers a way to do just that: www.aclu.org/action/broadband106.html

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StopDrLaura.com

BY *John Aravosis*

"Dr. Laura" Schlessinger had it coming. Known for her take-no-prisoners conservatism and her biting tongue, she calls homosexuality a "biological error" and suggests that a "huge portion of the male homosexual populace is predatory on young boys." To many in the gay community, Paramount Television's decision to reward such slander with a TV talk show this fall reeked of a double standard: Had Schlessinger called blacks or Jews genetically deficient, Hollywood wouldn't touch her with a ten-foot pole. So, on March 1, three friends and I launched StopDrLaura.com to educate Paramount and its parent company, Viacom, about Dr. Laura's extreme anti-gay rhetoric.

What started as a simple six-page website is now a high-profile grassroots movement comprising 31 chapters in the U.S. and Canada and tens of thousands of registered activists worldwide. In response to the site (which has 50 million hits to date), advertisers immediately began dropping Schlessinger's highly rated radio show, even though our real target was her upcoming TV show. In the end, over 26 blue-chip advertisers dumped the radio show, and nationwide protests erupted in nearly three dozen cities. But Paramount wouldn't blink, and on September 11 "Dr. Laura" hit daytime television. We responded by listing the program's advertisers on our site, and the real slaughter began.

That first week of "Dr. Laura," StopDrLaura.com got four million hits, and netizens around the world inundated the show's advertisers with e-mails and phone calls. By September 15, over 30 additional big-name advertisers had dropped "Dr. Laura." And, while at this writing the show continues to air in the U.S. (it's already been cancelled in Canada), Paramount has already paid a high price in ad revenue and reputation, and most critics say Dr. Laura's TV career is not long for this world.

How did we fight a major Hollywood studio, one of America's top radio talents, and some of the country's biggest brands? With a $15,000 budget (mostly raised from online sales of T-shirts with the slogan "Are you a biological error?"), an ever-growing army of volunteers (gleaned mostly off the Internet), and a website.

While StopDrLaura.com has had marked success, it's certainly not the first time the Internet has given birth to a spontaneous grassroots movement. In September 1998, a group of previously apolitical friends started asking people to sign a Web-based petition demanding that Congress "immediately censure President Clinton and move on to pressing issues facing the country." Within three months, MoveOn.org got half a million signatures, 5,500 volunteers, and pledges for $10 million in donations to be used to oust members of Congress who voted for impeachment. And StopDrLaura and MoveOn are not the only political players to have had an impact online: John McCain raised $6 million via the Internet for his failed presidential bid, and the ACLU sends nearly 300,000 messages a year to Congress through its website. But the most effective, highest-profile online campaigns to date have been run by people, not organizations, because the benefits and demands of the Internet favor the individual.

The most important benefit of the Internet for an individual is access to a cheap and easy means of communicating with millions of people. In the early '90s, I wanted to get involved in gay rights advocacy, but I didn't know the players. Over the last three years, using the Internet, I've been able to start my own online publication, cultivate an audience, establish credentials, and ultimately launch my own pro bono issue campaigns. The credibility I gained during those campaigns (along with the combined reputations of our co-founders) helped us launch StopDrLaura.com with no initial budget.

In addition to credibility, small players also lack resources (namely money and staff). The cost of running StopDrLaura.com as a traditional pre-Internet grassroots organization would certainly have required more in fund-raising than the T-shirt equivalent of a bake sale. "Postage alone would have killed us," says William Waybourn, a co-founder of StopDrLaura.com and former head of several national gay rights groups. Yet through our website and via e-mail we reach thousands of people a day, essentially at no cost other than our time.

While StopDrLaura.com was started by four friends who had full-time jobs elsewhere, we now rely on a loose-knit network of organizing committees in 31 cities and, more importantly, tens of thousands of private citizens we've never met who take it upon themselves to regularly visit our website, read our e-mail alerts, and act. StopDrLaura.com has "members" in China, Latin America, Europe, and across North America. The ability of the Internet to connect allies and forge relationships is perhaps the greatest secret of our success, and it is the reason why individual political actors prosper online.

The Internet provides activists with the ability to reach and empower even disparate constituencies. The gay community in particular lives in a diaspora. Most gays and lesbians are born into heterosexual families and must affirmatively seek out others like themselves, unlike children born black or Jewish. The religious right, our number-one nemesis, has always had the advantage of gathering its "family" every Sunday, which provides a ready-made venue for indoctrinating the troops on a regular basis. But for a new generation of gays and lesbians, the Internet is our church, our gathering place. And we go every day.

In addition, gay civil rights advocates have long had to contend with activists who are afraid of getting politically involved, fearing for their families, their jobs, and their lives. The Internet, and the anonymity and safety it provides, offers closeted gays an opportunity to fight back for the first time in history. Sean Williams, who runs an extremely popular online community called SeanPatrickLive.com, says the Internet is of particular benefit to gay activism because it empowers closeted gays to "publicly stand up for themselves in a private way."

No matter when Schlessinger's TV show is finally canceled (the ratings are so bad that it's only a matter of time), StopDrLaura.com has already won. We've used the Internet to teach Paramount and Viacom a painful lesson about profiting from prejudice, and we've gotten Schlessinger to tone down her anti-gay rhetoric (which, with 20 million radio listeners, is no minor achievement). And, most importantly, we've used technology—so often perceived as cold and dehumanizing—to empower a new generation of gay activists to recognize the value of their own humanity and stand up for their civil rights.

JOHN ARAVOSIS *is president of Wired Strategies, an Internet consulting group.*

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Net Worth

BY *James J. Cramer*

Nobody wants to admit it, but the dot-com movement is over. People don't want more websites any more than they want more TV channels or more newspapers to read. And why is that? Because e-commerce turned out to be a boring, static, incredibly expensive, and certainly not foolproof way to do business, and the stock market will no longer subsidize it.

I am sure my view sounds like one of those "sour grapes" rants from some old-world media guy who predicted the downfall of the dot-coms from day one. But it isn't. I got it. I got in early, with my partner, Martin Peretz, the editor-in-chief of this magazine. We decided to create TheStreet.com to take advantage of the Internet's ability to be everywhere, anywhere, around the clock. We thought it would be cheap and easy. We thought wrong. And we are regarded as successful Net entrepreneurs!

The Net is an incredibly expensive place to do business. The hardware is expensive. The tech people who know how to manipulate the Web to your advantage are expensive. The means of publicizing a site are beyond the reach of everyone these days, even the wealthiest companies. (Why else would guys like Steven Spielberg, David Geffen, and Jeffrey Katzenberg, three of the richest people in the world, pull the plug on their site if it were so cheap and convenient?) And nobody is willing to pay for it.

One look at TheStreet.com tells you why. We provide real-time financial news and analysis on the Web that we could get a huge amount of money for anywhere but online. Instead, our site just went from being subscription-based to being supported by advertising, in part because subscriptions just don't grow fast enough. The only reason we have had the success we have shown today is that we started early enough to get lots of free branding from people who thought the Web was just a fad that would go away. If you told me you wanted to create a new TheStreet.com now, I would tell you not to bother. It would cost a fortune, and I wouldn't give it much of a chance. People hate paying for anything on the Web, and I am beginning to think they always will. They will pay nothing on the Web for information that they would pay thousands of dollars for if it arrived in print or by fax! Illogical but true.

The Web wasn't a fad. It created some new and lasting habits, including Internet book buying, stock trading, and supply purchasing. But to get those new habits started now would take hundreds of millions of dollars in branding, which no one can afford. The branding window was open; some jumped through. And then it slammed shut—probably forever.

The lack of commercial possibilities for the Web means that in the end only two or three companies will make it big on the Internet. The others will just muddle along waiting to be bought by someone else or hoping to combine with others to get critical mass that now only America Online and Yahoo have.

Forgive me for being a naysayer. But I have been through the dot-com wars. There will be no commercial winners beyond the few we have today. There will be just a variety of somewhat satisfied users, a couple of new companies worth investing in, and a massive number of disappointments.

We have to recognize that the dot-com movement is over, so that we can move on and stop talking about all of this "new economy" garbage. There was and is and will be only one economy, an economy made up of for-profit enterprises. Right now the Web has shown that it can support a handful of those—no more.

As long as the stock market supported the creation of dot-coms with ridiculously healthy valuations based on a new-economy takeover, there was a chance that we could truly have created some sort of revolution. Well-capitalized companies have a way of winning if they stay in the game long enough.

But that's history now. Most of the money is burned through. There is no new money coming. It sure was nice while it lasted.

JAMES J. CRAMER *is a hedgefund manager and a co-founder of TheStreet.com. His fund, as well as Cramer personally, are long TheStreet.com.*

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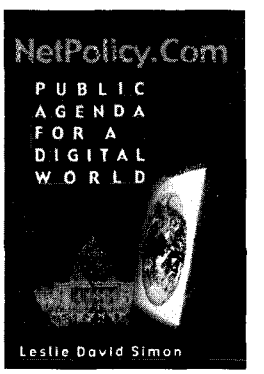

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Digital Deluge

BY *Alex J. Mandl*

Let me begin with a confession: In the age of information addiction, I'm an unrepentant enabler. Every day, I drive the start-up company I founded four years ago toward an unambiguous objective—building the biggest possible communications pipes to as many customers in as many places as fast as we can. We're focused on a simple equation: speed of information flow multiplied by volume of data equals network capacity, or bandwidth, as it's called by the digerati. More speed, more volume, more bandwidth, more information—that's our mission.

Across the country and around the world, fiber-optic and coaxial cables, high-frequency microwave networks, mobile wireless systems, and satellite links, to name a few of the burgeoning broadband technologies, are rapidly replacing the outmoded and aging copper infrastructure of the old communications network—the telephone system. According to researchers, by 2003 the total broadband network capacity of the United States will expand by an astonishing 6,500 percent over its 1996 level.

We're building these bigger and bigger pipes to meet an exploding demand for information. Business-to-business e-commerce, which today is valued at about $150 billion annually, will reach $3 trillion in just three years. On the consumer side, demand for high-speed Internet access is expected to grow at an annualized rate of 100 percent through at least 2003.

The Internet used to be a way to send mail more quickly. Now it's become an at-home shopping mall, an at-your-fingertips research library, an instant stock exchange, and a thousand other things no one had dreamed of five or six years ago. No one, it seems, can get enough.

Of course, this is just the beginning. The exponential growth of broadband communications networks will fuel an ever increasing demand for more bandwidth-intensive applications—instant news on your Palm Pilot, Web-based video conferencing on your PC, interactive chess on your cell phone. It has been suggested that in the future, our only bandwidth limitation will be the amount of space we have on our belts to hang hand-held communication devices.

The effects of this tremendous growth are not confined to commerce. On one hand, the Internet can be—and is—a powerful tool for societal transformation, offering up more information to more people than ever before possible. But the rapid rise of the bandwidth-hungry society also raises concerns—about taxation, privacy, data protection, intellectual property, the exploitation of children, and the growing gap between digital haves and have-nots. As we careen down the information highway at a relentlessly quickening pace, I'd like to suggest that we spend a little more time considering all the implications of this brave new world that we're creating.

Taxation, privacy and the safety of children are critical issues, ones that are being widely debated in legislatures, think tanks, and universities. But I'd like to raise another, more fundamental concern, which I believe has largely been ignored. Put simply, it is this: The ignorance of the twenty-first century will not come about because of an information drought. It will be created by an information deluge. As much as I'd like to claim that as an original thought, I must tell you it is not. But it is a very compelling one nonetheless.

The democratization created by the new world of exploding bandwidth—the new world that my company and I are helping to create—clearly is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, more information is available to more people more quickly than at any other period. But we've unleashed this flood of information at a time when, as a society, we probably are least equipped to deal with it.

Over the past few years, the massive deluge of raw information that has brought so much democracy to the marketplace of ideas has at the same time disrupted—some would say destroyed—the complex support systems that we as a society created to sift, sort, and evaluate information. Just a few hundred years ago, it was possible for everyone to stand as his or her own judge of history—a single human being could, in a lifetime, read every book ever written and every author ever published. But over time, we of necessity delegated responsibility for sifting information to trusted surrogates—newspaper editors, magazine writers, critics, and later network TV anchors and reporters. We chose these surrogates carefully, based on their performance over time. Neither the speed nor the volume of the analysis they brought to their chosen subject was sufficiently overwhelming to dampen our appetite for more.

As recently as 20 years ago, the principal source of information for the average citizen on any given day was a daily newspaper or a half-hour network TV program. Although in hindsight it may seem quaint, there was a certain collective reassurance that we took from the flickering video image of "Uncle Walter" telling us at the end of each day: "That's the way it is." And if you were one of the few who didn't like Walter, you could always read *The New York Times*.

Today, of course, that world is gone, blown up in the bandwidth explosion. Not only do we have CNN, we have CNNfn, CNBC, MSNBC, Bloomberg, Dow Jones, and even the Associated Press now available on our televisions, PCs or Palm Pilots at any hour of any day.

One can argue that this new information paradigm is incredibly liberating. No longer are we slaves to a cabal of newspaper editors and TV producers who tell us what is important and what is not. On the other hand, the deafening waterfall of data that we have unleashed often seems so overwhelming and overpowering that many of us run from it just as fast as we can. And that's how, if we're not careful, we'll create the insidious ignorance of the twenty-first century.

Our challenge is to find a way to artfully manage the information flow so that we can put it to work. We're finding ways to do this in the business world, with software applications that make sense of millions of transactions and interactions, providing analysis that can tell us more about our businesses and our customers than we ever knew before.

But, as bandwidth enablers, it's also our responsibility to help people manage the information flow in their personal lives. We've made a start with rudimentary search engines, Web-based comparative shopping, news-mining software, and the like. But we have a very long way to go. If we meet the challenge, the rewards will be immense. But if we fail, all of us could drown in the torrent.

ALEX J. MANDL *is chairman and CEO of Teligent.*

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Education Upgrade

BY *John Anderson*

Much has changed in the admissions field in the last ten years: applicant pools have increased at many colleges; coaching for the SAT has reached new levels of sophistication; independent educational consultants, who advise students on a fee basis and were once a novelty, are now commonplace; and a cottage industry of service providers, from video producers and graphic designers to marketing consultants, is blossoming. But of all the new wrinkles in college admissions, e-admissions is both the newest and potentially the most profound.

Broadly, e-admissions is any aspect of admissions that has been influenced by the Internet. While students and their families still talk with guidance counselors, friends, and relatives during their college searches, students are increasingly turning to the Web, where they will find countless "matching" services. To use such a service, students enter data about themselves, which is then matched with data provided by colleges—yielding, one would hope, a list of suitable colleges. While the Kenyon admissions office still receives thousands of letters and phone calls requesting information, we now receive more information requests via e-mail. Even before many of these students request information, they visit our website to learn more about Kenyon. When the application deadline approaches, students still do panic, staying up late into the night polishing their essays and wracking their brains for one more reason we ought to admit them. But instead of rushing to the post office to make sure the postmark on their applications match the deadline date, they hit the "send" button on their computers to speed their online applications to the colleges of their dreams.

How have these innovations affected college admissions? Prospective students have immediate access to much more information on colleges than ever before. Websites contain everything that is traditionally found in catalogs and view books, plus thousands of pages of additional information. On the Kenyon website, prospective students can listen to the choir, keep track of the construction of the new science buildings, play with molecular models, read (and sometimes hear and view) student projects, peruse the college newspaper, and check the weather in Gambier. By searching the directories we provide, prospective students can locate and, using e-mail, correspond with friends who attend. They can e-mail faculty directly and ask about courses, facilities, and postgraduate opportunities for their majors. International students now have a much easier time of getting college information and filing applications. Online applications are easy to complete and are a blessing for those students who, like me, have nearly illegible handwriting and spell poorly.

Who benefits from e-admissions? Students and their families, certainly, who are more knowledgeable about colleges then ever before. The online searches, while not flawless, do help students find colleges that fit their interests, including ones they had not previously heard of. Requests for information are handled quickly. Some of the drudgery and redundancy of filling out applications has been removed, and students are no longer hindered by the unpredictability of the postal service. Colleges are beneficiaries also. We can get our message out to students whom we are missing using more traditional communication strategies. Using the full capabilities of the Web, we can demonstrate distinctive features of the college. Information can be kept current—we do not have to wait until the next publication cycle to update it. E-mail, electronic mailing lists, and chat rooms allow for direct communication with students, creating a more personal line of communication.

As e-commerce has permanently changed the way businesses operate, so, too, has e-admissions reshaped the way colleges and students handle admissions. The challenge to keep up with and evaluate the myriad opportunities that spring up seemingly daily can be daunting (as can the cost). It is also very exciting. College admissions will never be what it was even just a few years ago, and we think that is good.

JOHN ANDERSON *is Dean of Admissions at Kenyon College.*

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Power Polling

BY *Ron Howard*

One of the bedrocks on which the entire ethic of the Internet rests is this: "There shall be no barriers to the free flow of ideas." The Internet is not only chopping away at political and geographic boundaries; it's hacking apart boundaries of ideas, too.

The "magic" of the Internet is its unique ability to foster creative resonance. I have an idea. I e-mail it to three other people. They add their ideas and send it to a few more people. At some point the new material comes back to me and the loop starts again. It is the equivalent of an intellectual particle accelerator.

Two centuries ago, ideas spread over the course of years. Today, via the Internet, they spread over the course of seconds and through many dimensions.

But my description of the modern-day e-mail spiral works only for people who have access to other people who would care to read the original manifesto and react to it. But what about the guy sitting in his hardware store in southeastern Ohio? Or the woman in her bookshop in the western suburbs of Chicago? Assuming their potential to see their ideas spiral is limited by their isolation, to whom would they send ideas for analysis, review, and intensification?

SpeakOut.com was started with those two people in mind. We don't provide just a forum for peer-to-peer communications, we provide catalytic content—from published sources as well as enterprised material—to prime the pump of discussion.

Through the online tools we have pioneered, individuals and organizations are able to start or join a petition; send aggregated messages; and have their thoughts and ideas melded into a discussion group. The Continental Congress meets the village tavern. Think of the Declaration of Independence as our country's most revered aggregated message: thirteen colonies, one idea. Today, SpeakOut provides a way for people to hone their positions and then gives them a booster rocket for this new generation of accelerated ideas.

In the course of developing this Internet business model, we quickly realized that we were building a database of informed, politically active people whose impressions of, and positions on, issues of the day might be interesting to examine. We quickly began thinking in terms of having our registered users participate in surveys on the issues that they were expert in, as well as other less-known issues to which they would bring intelligence and creativity but not necessarily preconceived notions.

Nearly every website has a "play poll" housed somewhere on the homepage designed to elicit reactions. "Do you think the Olympics should move around, or have the same home each year?" is one example. These questions are fun, but what are they really worth? If you don't know who's answering the question, the answer has no validity.

Our vision was significantly different. We wanted to use our database to produce a vast sample of individuals looking at issues in much greater depth, either in a standard multiple-choice poll or a technically more challenging "dial poll" of participants watching streamed images over the Internet.

From that first realization—that the Internet could soon replace the telephone for opinion research—we tapped into the knowledge and experience of well-known polling firms to design a system that allows us to use the breadth of the Internet to deploy dial polls in which thousands of people can simultaneously share their perceptions of a live or streamed event. The massive database of digits created by such a second-by-second analysis is automatically aggregated, churning out immediate charts and graphs, which are appropriately weighted to match the national population.

At the Democratic and Republican National Conventions, SpeakOut.com produced the largest-ever focus group and provided the analysis of its participants in a partnership with MSNBC. Results came immediately after the major speeches, and were only accessible via the Internet. These data were used on the air and by a large number of print media, including the full graphs published by the *Los Angeles Times*.

As we move toward the end of the political season, SpeakOut will be "dialing" the major debates again, with an even larger sample than the conventions, providing within seconds the responses of a large number of politically active viewers to what they saw when the candidates went face-to-face.

One of the issues often posed to the growing family of "political" websites is, "What happens after November?" At SpeakOut, we are branching out quickly into other areas of American life. Believe it or not, people like to "speak out" about Britney Spears even more than about George W. Bush. The same technology we developed to look at political speeches and ads can be instantly adapted for movie trailers, advertisements, on-air talent evaluation, book and magazine cover art, and so on. The intellectual drivers for SpeakOut.com remain the same: Providing every day people the opportunity to participate in decisions affecting, perhaps, millions.

Using the tools and techniques we have developed at SpeakOut.com, those two people mentioned above—the man with the hardware store and the woman with the bookstore—can have a voice in determining the direction a major corporation might take in response to a crisis, or the type of programming people will receive on their televisions.

Because of the omnipresence of the Internet, these voices can be chosen from a specific area or a wide area. Unlike traditional focus groups, there is no need to find people in a certain geographic location who possess both the appropriate demographic profile and transportation to get to a focus-group studio on a rainy winter evening.

Through both already known and new techniques, SpeakOut can generate a much larger, far more diverse sample that gives a potentially more accurate picture of what people are thinking. And those participants sit not in front of a one-way mirror but in their living rooms, at a time of their own choosing. The Internet is the new one-way mirror.

SpeakOut.com℠

RON HOWARD *is chairman and CEO of SpeakOut.com.*

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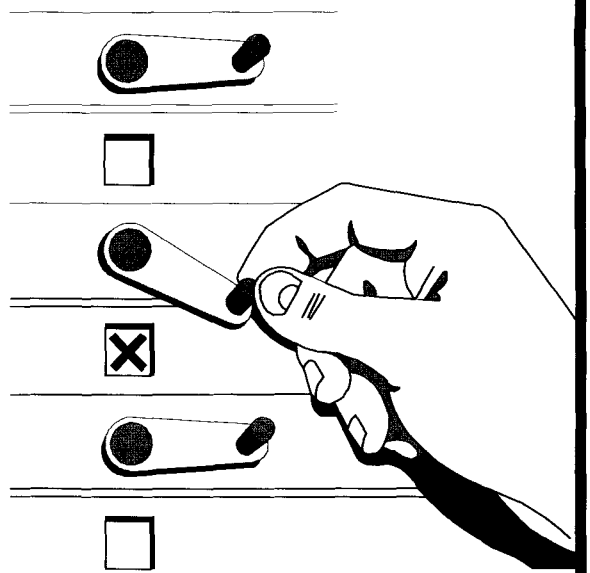
On November 7, millions won't be allowed to vote!

Suffrage, the bedrock of the Constitution, is being eroded in the name of the War on Drugs.



- *There are nearly four million persons currently or permanently disenfranchised as a result of laws that take away the voting rights of felons and ex-felons.*
- *No other democracy besides the U.S. disenfranchises convicted offenders for life. Many democratic nations, including Denmark, France, Israel, and Poland, permit prisoners to vote as well.*
- *Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of the disenfranchised are not in prison but are on probation, on parole or have completed their sentences.*
- *1.4 million African American men -- 13 percent of the adult African American male population -- have lost the right to vote, a rate of disenfranchisement that is seven times the national average. By comparison, in the 1996 general election 4.6 million African American men voted.*
- *In Florida one in three African American men has permanently lost the right to vote.*
- *In five states Iowa, Mississippi, New Mexico, Virginia, and Wyoming one in four black men (24% to 28%) have permanently lost the right to vote.*

Can we expect people to be responsible citizens if they are treated as second class citizens?

Common Sense for Drug Policy, Kevin B. Zeese, President
703-354-5694, 703-354-5695 (fax), info@csdp.org, www.csdp.org

Sources: Fellner, Jamie and Mauer, Marc, "Losing the Vote: The Impact of Felony Disenfranchisement Laws in the United States (Washington, DC: Human Rights Watch & The Sentencing Project, 1998).

Mauer, Marc and Allard, Patricia, "Regaining the Vote: An Assessment of Activity Relating to Felon Disenfranchisement Laws" (Washington, DC: Sentencing Project, January 2000), from the web at http://www.sentencingproject.org/news/regainvote.htm, last accessed Sept. 27, 2000.

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White House officials put it, "keeping Iraq off the president's desk," the Clinton team in early 1999 commenced an internal review of Iraq policy. "Saddam seemed to win everywhere there was a confrontation," explains Patrick Clawson, an Iraq expert at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, describing the mindset that prompted the review. "So the administration decided it would be better off with Iraq off the front page." A National Security Council staffer who participated in the process says, "The whole point was to get Iraq to disappear off the radar screen." As a result, the review generated three policy recommendations: de-emphasize the use of force in public pronouncements, shore up the U.N. sanctions regime, and bolster the Iraqi opposition.

This last goal was the only component of the review that the administration publicly disclosed. And it was also the only one that, inside the administration, was not meant to be taken seriously. National Security Adviser Sandy Berger publicly argued that Washington was now "pivoting" to a policy of "regime change," and Assistant Secretary of State Martin Indyk characterized the new policy as "containment plus regime change." In November 1998, the president had signed the Iraq Liberation Act, which pledged financial and military assistance to the Iraqi opposition, and White House aides now began to echo Republican calls for a doctrine of "rollback" in Iraq.

But an official who took part in the review says talk of regime change and of aiding Saddam's opponents was "purely for public consumption." Indeed, far from embracing rollback, the administration rolled over. It wasn't the first time. The Clintonites had abandoned Saddam's opponents once before, in 1996, when the Iraqi leader launched an attack against the rebels' CIA-funded bases in the Kurdish "enclave" of northern Iraq, refusing to provide them with desperately needed air support. With the administration's approval, Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni, commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East, then launched a public relations offensive, declaring in speeches and interviews that "a weak, fragmented, chaotic Iraq ... is more dangerous in the long run than a contained Saddam is now." And, to underscore the Iraqi opposition's putative weakness, the State Department peddled a list of competing exile groups, while Berger publicly discerned in plans to topple Saddam the likelihood of another Bay of Pigs.

Today, its policy review notwithstanding, the White House continues to impede implementation of the Iraq Liberation Act, releasing only $50,000 of the $97 million in Pentagon funds Congress has allotted to the opposition. Additional State Department "aid" has been used to fund such pressing needs as a conflict-management program for Saddam's opponents founded by Roger Fisher, the author of *Getting to Yes*. "There has been almost no action taken to support the Iraqi opposition," says Francis Brooke, the Washington adviser to the anti-Saddam Iraqi National Congress.

In fact, the very officials tasked with administering support to Saddam's opponents routinely denigrate them. Soon after calling for stepped-up aid to the Iraqi opposition, Berger hired as his Iraq adviser Kenneth Pollack, a former CIA analyst who had just co-written an article titled "The Rollback Fantasy." Not surprisingly, Pollack—who had touted Iraq's military prowess in the run-up to the Gulf war and dismissed Saddam's opponents in the pages of *Foreign Affairs* and at Council on Foreign Relations soirees—has become a lightning rod for Republican critics and members of the Iraqi opposition, who accuse him of trying to stymie their efforts to undermine Saddam. In a similar vein, Frank Ricciardone, the State Department coordinator responsible for implementing the Iraq Liberation Act, says the United States won't supply arms to the Iraqi opposition until "we

DAVID SUTER

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know that they represent fighters who are willing to die" for regime change. (Thousands of them already have.) Ricciardone, like many in the administration, tells opposition leaders, bizarrely, that the United States cannot provide them with weapons because that would violate the U.N. embargo.

As for the policy review's second aim, shoring up sanctions, Baghdad's newly reopened Saddam International Airport has been disgorging a steady stream of politicians and businessmen on unauthorized flights from Russia, France, and the Arab world. And the air traffic has elicited hardly a peep from Washington. On the contrary, the administration is now negotiating with the U.N. Sanctions Committee to revise the rules governing flights into Iraq so it won't appear that sanctions are being violated. A senior White House official explains that "the battle has been lost" but insists the administration is actively working to "retain a consensus" for isolating Iraq at the United Nations.

But there is no such consensus. One after another, members of the Gulf war coalition have reopened their embassies in Baghdad, sent dignitaries to commune with Saddam, and lamented the injustice of the embargo. Turkey has even threatened that it may soon curtail U.S. flights that patrol the no-fly zone from its Incirlik air base. And this week Iraqi officials will travel to Egypt to attend their first Arab League meeting in a decade. For its part, the United States last December signed off on abolishing altogether the U.N.-imposed ceiling on Iraqi oil sales, while, outside the auspices of the United Nations, Baghdad smuggles out an additional $2 billion in oil a year, using the profits to replenish its military and erect garish palaces. Despite—or more likely because of—the fact that much of that oil transits our allies Turkey and Jordan, the United States has turned a blind eye, refusing to issue so much as a démarche.

BUT IF THE policy review's recommendations on the Iraqi opposition and sanctions have gone nowhere, its goal of pushing military confrontation off the radar screen has been aggressively pursued. Berger and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, in particular, have been eager to ratchet down the campaign of attrition in which U.S. warplanes have been engaged. Problem is, the Iraqis won't let them. As soon as the 1998 strikes ceased, Iraqi jets began challenging the no-fly zone and firing anti-aircraft guns and missiles at U.S. aircraft. Nonetheless, Albright and Berger went so far as to argue that U.S. aircraft shouldn't be allowed to attack surface-to-air missile sites under construction in the no-fly zone—at least not until fired upon themselves.

Still, the air campaign continued. But it did so in a curious way. Intent on keeping the skirmishes with Iraq out of the headlines, the White House instructed the Pentagon to stop providing reporters with details about air strikes. The Pentagon also devised a strategy whereby the Air Force would fill 2,000-pound bombs with concrete instead of explosives and drop them on Iraq. "The guidance equipment is still there, but the cement is less expensive," explained Lieutenant Colonel Michael Waters, spokesman for the allied air operation over northern Iraq. But cost wasn't the only reason the United States started bombarding Iraq with anvils. "The way we're conducting this is kept within the parameters of political acceptability," an administration official told *The New York Times*. "We don't want things to go wrong."

But things have gone wrong anyway. Iraq has violated the no-fly zones on hundreds of occasions during the past year and massed its troops on the Kuwaiti and, most recently, the Jordanian borders. And last month Iraq even crossed what Albright likes to call a "red line": An Iraqi fighter flew across the southern no-fly zone into Saudi Arabia—the first time an Iraqi plane had violated Saudi airspace in a decade. The *Times* noted without comment that U.S. planes "were not flying that day and were unable to scramble quickly enough to challenge the Iraqi plane." What the *Times* didn't mention was that, according to senior administration officials, the planes weren't flying because the White House had grounded them: The president apparently didn't want any trouble while he was attending the U.N. millennium summit in New York. Alarmed Pentagon officials nonetheless issued prepare-to-deploy orders and drew up plans for several days of retaliatory air strikes. Their plans were dismissed out of hand.

BUT NOWHERE HAS the administration's determination to avoid another showdown with Saddam been more evident than in its revised approach to weapons inspections. Before Baghdad expelled the inspectors in 1998, the cornerstone of America's Iraq policy was a U.N. inspections regime that involved teams of international experts prowling Iraq in search of evidence of weapons of mass destruction. And last month the new chief U.N. weapons inspector, Hans Blix, planned to announce that his team was ready to return to Iraq to resume inspections. The declaration was long overdue. "In the absence of inspectors on the ground," Assistant Secretary of State Edward Walker says, "we must rely on national technical means, which cannot provide the same level of assurance." Yet the administration, intent on averting a confrontation with Iraq, scuttled Blix's plan. A Security Council diplomat told the *Post* that the decision to block Blix derived from U.S. as well as Russian concerns "that this might create a climate of confrontation at an inappropriate time." Albright, indeed, has publicly ruled out the use of force in response to Saddam's intransigence. "There seem to be many people who are guessing that not much might happen before the American elections," Blix says. "I think that might be a good guess."

If there's a silver lining in this policy disaster, it's that, one way or another, Berger, Albright, and Pollack will likely be returned to the private sector come January. And, by all accounts, either Gore or Bush would be far more hawkish toward Iraq. The Republican Party platform calls for overthrowing Saddam, and Bush counselors say they will transform the no-fly zones into "no-move" zones and even "detach" a piece of Iraq for opposition forces to use as a base. Gore, too, has called for "removing Saddam Hussein from power" and trying him for war crimes. As a spokesman for the Iraqi opposition puts it: "There won't be a change of government in Baghdad until there's one in Washington." Election Day can't come a moment too soon. ■

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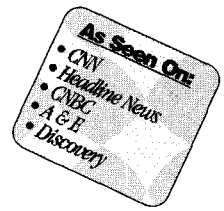

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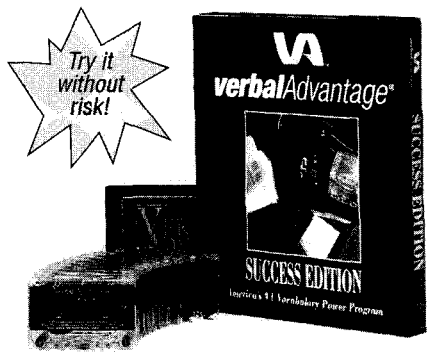

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Beyond Satire

Satire is a troublesome form. Sorry subjects have to be put before an audience in order to satirize them, and there is always the risk that merely putting them there will seem to approve them. Molière himself found it necessary to justify Tartuffe with a preface in which he said: "The strongest means of attacking vice is to expose it to the laughter of the world." But when satire goes deeper than exposure, when it becomes irony, it gets even more risky.

A prime instance for me is a play by George Tabori that I saw in the 1960s. (I forget the title.) It was set in a German concentration camp where Jewish prisoners were ordered to perform the Shylock scenes of *The Merchant of Venice* for the amusement of the camp officers. The Jews saw the intended humiliation as an opportunity. Shylock and Tubal performed with such wild exaggeration of Nazi caricatures of Jews that the performance went past the actors' humiliation to became an attack on those who believed those caricatures: Tabori risked moving satire into irony, which was a gamble. A theater audience is mixed in sensibility, and a playwright who relies on an entire audience to appreciate irony is making a very large bet, often lost. (Tabori lost. His play, as far as I know, disappeared.)

Spike Lee's new film, **Bamboozled** (Universal), takes the same risk. Many have called it satire, but I think this is mistaken. It is a long ironic outburst of anger, anger that *derives* from satire. It begins as exposure of white people's jokes about black people, in theater and film and television and radio and minstrel shows and toys. All those jokes, unfunny here, are evidence of long-standing cruelties. The blatant fact that they were once meant to be laughable is only the film's first step toward making white people see, really see, what they once laughed at—to a wretched degree, still laugh at. *Bamboozled* then goes on from there.

The title comes from a Malcolm X speech in which he chastened black people for their acceptance of indignities. (The screenplay also has clear references to the Chayefsky-Lumet *Network* and the Schulberg-Kazan *A Face in the Crowd*.) In *Bamboozled* the black acceptance continues, along with a white acceptance based on a new kind of patronization. A big TV network is in a slump, and a white production chief delegates a young black producer, Delacroix, to come up with a show that will spark the ratings. Delacroix, an ultra-smooth Harvard graduate, delivers an idea called "Mantan," based on nineteenth-century minstrel shows. It has a double rationale: to prove how far we have progressed in enlightened tolerance since the Rastus-Sambo days—the black performers will even wear blackface—and at the same time to use the Rastus-Sambo routines for entertainment But Lee himself has a third implicit purpose, not merely to flaunt how despicable the production chief is and how career-crazy Delacroix is. That would be satire. Lee wants to show that this enlightened exposure of old prejudices is fundamentally just another way to exploit them. Let's call it the Tabori twist.

When "Mantan" becomes a smash hit—the new millennium's "coon show"—studio audiences, both whites and blacks, start arriving in blackface and wearing white gloves like the performers. When a black and blackfaced comic goes into the audience and asks people who they are, each one, usually white, gets up, waves his gloved hands like a minstrel, and says, "I'se a nigger." Laughter and loud applause. For Lee, this isn't the conquest of prejudice but prejudice wrapped in latter-day cultivated chic. (Lee's disgust easily applies to other "enlightened" minority caricatures these days, ugly history to be pacified by rolling in it.)

The theatrical center of "Mantan" is the dancing of two former street performers rechristened for the show as Mantan and Sleep'n'Eat. The latter is played by Tommy Davidson, who scintillates. Mantan is Savion Glover, who burst onto Broadway a few seasons back as very possibly the best tap dancer alive. His dancing here is well up to the mark, and he also shows that he can act acceptably. The same is not true of Damon Wayans as Delacroix, who merely obeys director's orders. Jada Pinkett-Smith, as his assistant, tries to give sexy dignity to her part, but she, along with all the others, falls victim to the lapses in Lee's screenplay.

After he conceived the central idea, the supposedly satirical minstrel show as TV hit, Lee had to think up a story to contain it. That story is clumsy and trite, involving some love tangles and a self-styled Mau Mau group who attack "Mantan." The ending feels desperate as if, in vaudeville lingo, Lee didn't know how to get off. Still, whatever the weaknesses of his screenplay, Lee shows again that he is an incisive, perceptive director. He has discarded his tricky touches of the past—for instance, the actor on an invisible moving platform—and simply plunges us into the action unreeling before us.

What's more, after the letdown of the plot's finish, he goes on: he lifts the film again with a pictorial coda several minutes long that transfixes with its embarrassing truth, a collage of our prior acceptances—clips of fiction films and newsreels with jolly jigging black folk, clips with Stepin Fetchit and Manton Moreland, with silent-comedy black actors who turn white when frightened, with the casual use of blackface by Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland and Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire. There is no glimpse of Myrna Loy in the blackface role of her early days, but there is a shot of Amos and Andy in the brief TV career that followed their immense radio success. (Every weekday evening for years the nation's radios tuned them in at 7:00 p.m. *The New Yorker* once ran a double-spread cartoon of Amos and Andy dressed as angels floating in the air next to a church steeple whose clock read 7:00. The title of the cartoon was "The Angelus." I grew up in an era when that cartoon was considered sweet.)

Lee is a troublemaker, a valuable one. He can talk loosely and can make flat or forced films; he can also make pungent, large, authentic works such as *Do the Right Thing* and *Malcolm X*. *Bamboozled* is less organically sound than either of those pictures, but it is an important contribution, I hope, to American discomfort.

Farewell Note. Richard Farnsworth died on October 6th at the age of 80. (The news of his death was announced by his fiancée!) The *New York Times* obituary headline crystallized his odd career: "Stunt Man and 2-Time Oscar Nominee." Farnsworth did stunts, mostly in Westerns, for almost forty years, while the film world failed to see that this man who was falling off horses was an exceptional

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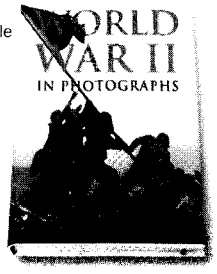

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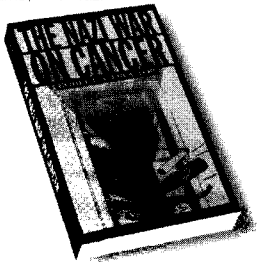

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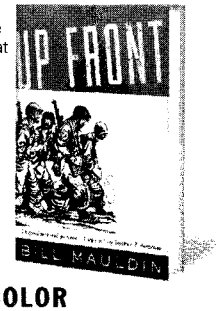

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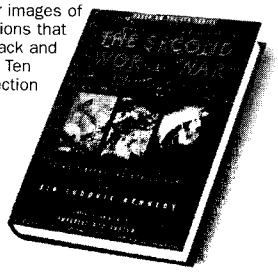

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acting talent.

When he got the chance to show it, his triumph was easy, complete. In *Comes a Horseman* and *The Grey Fox*, he made many of us ask, "Where has he *been*?" But it is his performance last year in *The Straight Story* that, far beyond Oscar considerations, will be a treasure as long as films last. I have seen the picture three times and want to see it again very soon as a farewell salute. Farnsworth is so fine, in so beautiful a film, that there is a temptation to view his career in a sort of Zen perspective: he was meant to live his life as he did in order for him to arrive at *The Straight Story* as the man he was. ■

Jed Perl on Art

Gold, Black, and Silver

A VISIT TO "The Arts of Hon'ami Kōetsu," at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, is a thrilling plunge into unfamiliar waters. Kōetsu, a master calligrapher, was born in 1558 into a distinguished Kyoto family of sword-polishers and connoisseurs. He came to prominence as Japan was emerging from more than a century of catastrophic warfare, and among a group of fellow artists and scholars he was a central figure in what has come to be known as the Kyoto Renaissance. These men were fascinated by the courtly arts of the Heian period, some 600 years earlier, a time that is probably best known to Westerners through Lady Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji*, the saga of aristocratic life that can startle us with its delicate delineations of complex psychological states. Kōetsu and his friends were besotted with the angular refinements of Heian painting and calligraphy, and in the work that they produced in the early-seventeenth century, an ancient Japanese aesthetic was imbued with a new kind of kinetic energy.

Kōetsu emerges in Philadelphia as a gutsy, playful classicist—a man who brings a self-confident swagger to his reverence for the past. The lithe, animated look of his calligraphy takes its essential impulse from the nervous, reedy thinness of Heian calligraphy. Kōetsu loves that hyper-refined, spidery, courtly tradition, and he gives it a real red-bloodedness—a boldness that I associate with a sensuous, independent-minded, self-aware man. Kōetsu might be said to lust after Heian refinements. He also gives them a dash of Zen's unabashed eccentricity. Kōetsu is less interested than many calligraphers in stop-on-a-dime edges and brush strokes that end in sharp, clean angles. His work feels more casual. Yet he never approaches the hell-bent, rip-snortingly intuitive style that the Chinese sometimes referred to as "wild cursive." While stretching Heian conventions, he does not shatter them. His work achieves a brilliant athletic equilibrium.

The offhand complexity of Kōetsu's art derives in large part from the collaborative nature of his work. This calligrapher liked to unfurl his black arabesques over paintings in shimmering silver and gold, many of which were done by the legendary painter Tawaraya Sōtatsu. There is a buoyant clarity to the commingling of image and text, a buoyancy that has less to do with juxtaposition as a compositional choice than with proximity as a lyric principle. What seems to have brought Kōetsu and Sōtatsu together was their mutual fascination with collaborative, mixed-media experimentation. They apparently joined forces on projects that involved woodblock printing as well as painting; and Kōetsu, independently, designed lacquer furnishings and containers and also produced ceramics.

The taste for boldly elegant effects that united Kōetsu and Sōtatsu is at the core of what the Japanese call Rimpa. The term refers specifically to a group of artists around the painter Ogata Kōrin (1658-1716); but like Romanticism in the West, Rimpa seems to describe not so much a particular style as an approach to art-making in general. Rimpa's independent, imaginative spirit is first announced when Kōetsu performs his calligraphic feats right on top of Sōtatsu's epigrammatic images, or inscribes a whole series of poems across beautifully colored papers by the master papermaker Kamishi Sōji. In Philadelphia, translations of Kōetsu's calligraphic escapades are an integral part of the show, so that we can observe that the subject of a lyric (spring or night) usually does not match the image (autumn or daytime), and this only adds another layer to the work's aura of cultivated serendipity.

This retrospective of Kōetsu's work, organized by Felice Fischer, the curator of Japanese art at the Philadelphia Museum, is a signal achievement. True, it is not the first exhibition in this country to focus on the Kyoto Renaissance. "Word in Flower: The Visualization of Classical Literature in Seventeenth-Century Japan," at Yale in 1989, touched on related issues of the revival of courtly culture and the complex relationship of image and text in seventeenth-century art. And there have been a number of important shows of Japanese calligraphy in recent years, especially "Masters of Japanese Calligraphy," mounted in New York in 1984 by the Asia Society and Japan House. But "The Arts of Hon'ami Kōetsu" is close to unique in that it focuses on the work of a single classical Japanese master. We have here an opportunity to see a Japanese artist in depth, in the way that we take it for granted that we will be able to see the work of Goya or Constable or innumerable other Western artists. What finally registers in Kōetsu's art—in his scrolls, in the smaller works known as poem cards, and in the ceramic teabowls that he created late in life—is the rippling power of his attentiveness. His work has a quicksilver quality, and in the context of an American museum this can feel as surprising as discovering fresh spring water along a familiar mountain path.

JAPANESE CALLIGRAPHY, AN awesomely refined vehicle for expressing hairbreadth emotional distinctions, is grounded in the very ubiquity of written communication. Language's graphic forms, which are comprehensible because they are conventional, are personalized by a calligrapher such as Hon'ami Kōetsu. And as Kōetsu puts his stamp on the written language, he is responding to all the ways in which the language has been personalized by master calligraphers in Japan and China during the preceding thousand years. His graphic choices become a visual conversation carried on with other calligraphers. You might say that calligraphy is a personalization of an abstraction. The conventional written element is an abstraction of a sound or a word, which the calligrapher reformulates so as to express some unique, idiosyncratic quality. (This is by no means a modern vision of calligraphy; Chinese writers of the seventh and eight centuries were already discussing calligraphy's ability to give written characters a distinctive emotional weight.)

The poems that fill most of Kōetsu's scrolls and cards come from a group of Japanese anthologies that date back to the tenth to twelfth centuries, to Heian times. Generally in a five line *tanka* form—with thirty-one syllables in a 5-7-5-7-7 pat-

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tern—they deal with nature, with love, with friendship, and combine vivid evocation with abrupt shifts in focus and stark, peremptory endings. Everything depends on the power of suggestion. Here is a late-tenth- or early-eleventh-century poem by Izumi Shikibu.

> Even the pillow
> Knows nothing—nor shall I tell;
> Give no account, then,
> Of exactly what you saw
> In this dream on a night in spring.

Some poems contain a single, bursting image. Here is Sosei Hōshi, a poet active between 859 and 923:

> As I gaze afar,
> I can see the capital
> In spring brocade—
> Handfuls of willow
> and cherry
> Are mixed in a maze
> of bloom.

These poems would be familiar to Kōetsu's friends; they might well know many of them by heart. What Kōetsu's calligraphy offered was a response to the poem, an interpretation that gave unexpected weights and emphases to familiar texts, and was in this sense perhaps more like a singer's interpretation of a *lied* by Schubert or Wolf than anything in the visual arts of the West.

The Japanese written language gave a calligrapher considerable latitude—a kind of improvisational freedom. Japanese writing combines a system of phonetic signs that sound out a word (known as the syllabary) with some use of the singular Chinese characters that each represent a word. Calligraphers of Kōetsu's day felt free to draw certain words (say, moon or spring) either as Chinese characters or in the syllabary form. The look of the words that made up the poem could literally be reshaped by the calligrapher.

Generally speaking, the Chinese characters have a rather stand-alone quality, the syllabary elements a more flowing, one-into-another feel. These differing qualities could be used to emphasize certain literary elements in the poem; but when a calligrapher is at work, literary interpretation has a parallel life as visual abstraction. A Chinese character might be used to create a stark emphasis in a corner. Syllabary elements might be employed to move the eye quickly across the page. In Kōetsu's work, the unto-itself Chinese characters are generally written in something close to what was known as standard form, while the elongated, tendrilly syllabary shapes are in a more flowing semi-cursive or cursive style.

A great calligrapher finds his own way through the classic forms; everything is a matter of emphasis, accent, attack. If there is a downside to the monographic approach in the Philadelphia show, it is that it does not give novices (and most of us are novices) sufficient opportunity to compare Kōetsu's style with those of his Japanese and Chinese contemporaries and precursors. Fischer has wisely presented elsewhere in the Philadelphia Museum a small selection of Japanese works from the permanent collection called "Tea, Poetry, and Rimpa," which gives us a chance to see a Heian poem card and works by some of Kōetsu's contemporaries. A huge show of Chinese calligraphy called "The Embodied Image," currently at the Metropolitan in New York, also offers useful comparisons. In the New York show, one can see the Chinese origins of Kōetsu's way of using contrasts of thicker and thinner lines to give the page a sensation of rhythmic expansion and contraction. Kōetsu's experimental arrangements of the poetic line—with words often arranged to give the page a diagonal thrust—are also grounded in numerous Japanese and Chinese precedents.

What is most striking in Kōetsu's calligraphy is his way of giving the brushstroke a whirling dimensionality. Many artists like to emphasize, through the horizontal and vertical reach of their calligraphy, the singularity—the flatness—of the page. Kōetsu does something different. He works his brush so that you find line overlapping line and space opening up. If the Heian line is a nervous silhouette, Kōetsu's line is a playful lunging force. Even his heaviest marks have a dancing animation. Kōetsu focuses not so much on singular images as on pressures and counterpressures. His lines leap, plunge, and dive through space. You feel that you are seeing both a mark and its trace—the afterimage that it leaves as it moves through air.

COURTESY DENVER ART MUSEUM

Hon'ami Kōetsu, Poem Card with Design of Moon and Pine Tree

In Kōetsu's work, calligraphy and painting often suggest overlapping voices. The most famous of his collaborators, the painter Tawaraya Sōtatsu, is known for his emphasis on broad tonal and coloristic effects; and the gold and silver washes in the poem cards and scrolls he did with Kōetsu have a flowing, easygoing richness unprecedented in Japanese art. (Those gold and silver images have some of the glittering immanence of the gold grounds on Italian trecento paintings.) The idea of calligraphing over printed or painted surfaces goes back to Heian times, but with these Rimpa artists the scale is different—bolder, more direct. Where the paint has not tarnished, Sōtatsu's rapid-fire close-up studies of clouds and flowering branches and rushing water have a shimmering, almost theatrical glamour. Amidst these vibrant settings, Kōetsu's calligraphy takes on some of the dramatic velocity of a hero's soliloquy. The surface almost dissolves; the black and gold and

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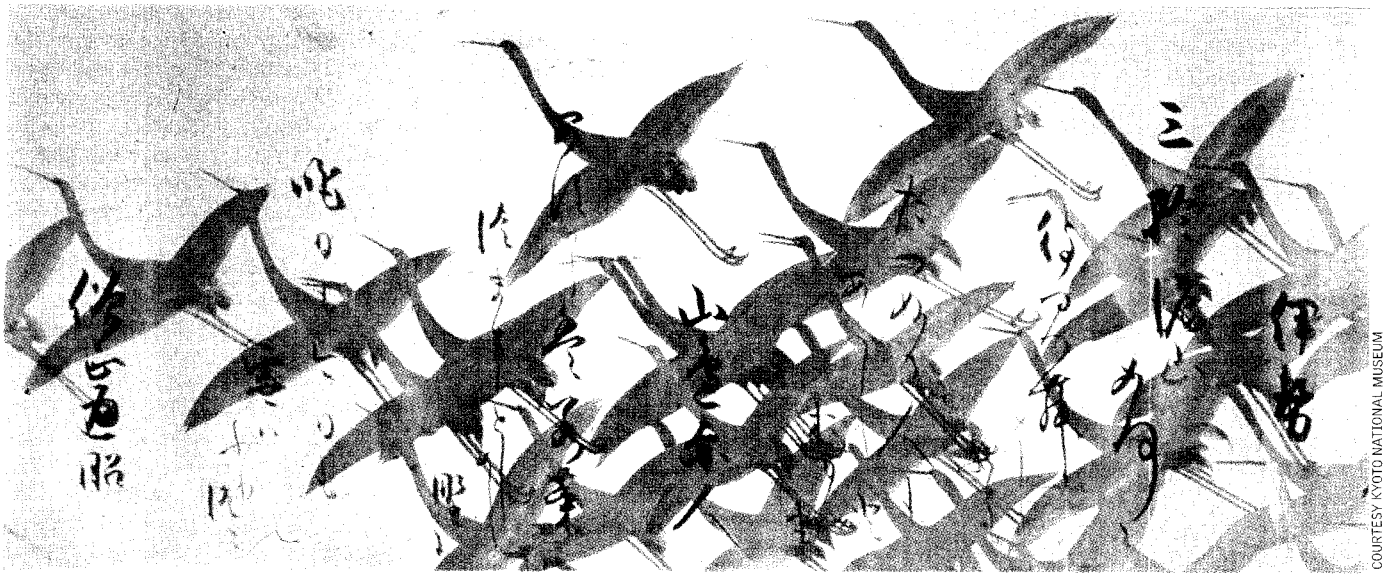

COURTESY KYOTO NATIONAL MUSEUM

Hon'ami Kōetsu, Poems from the Sanjurokkasenshu with Design of Cranes

silver seem to be exhaled by the paper.

We did not need to go to "The Arts of Hon'ami Kōetsu" to discover that classical Japanese art has nothing whatsoever to do with the strictly delimited structures—the literally framed structures—of Western painting. Yet this show is a startlingly powerful demonstration of the degree to which Japanese pictorial art is a matter of shifting viewpoints, of objects—poem cards, scrolls, screens—that are meant to be opened, closed, unrolled, rerolled, folded, unfolded, turned, moved. The surfaces of some of Kōetsu's scrolls are printed with mica designs, possibly by Sōtatsu, that are invisible except from a certain angle. In the seventeenth century, poem cards, with their mingling of written and painted evocations of nature, were probably sometimes hung on trees, so that these comments on nature could tremble like leaves in the wind.

Classical Japanese art asks us constantly to readjust our viewpoint, and the readjustments can be verbal as well as visual. Kōetsu was so intent on leaving his thematic options open that in his poem cards he almost invariably chose to set up a mismatch between image and text. It was as if calligraphy and painting were at an angle to one another. Verdant images accompany autumnal poems. A poem in which the moon appears is inscribed on a surface that suggests broad daylight. The effect is a little like certain operatic duets in which the singers are aware of one another's moves but are intent on going their own ways. What we have is less a union than a kind of free-form encounter.

A poem card from 1606, with gold clouds and silver and gold cherry blossoms is the backdrop for a lyric by the twelfth-century writer Kamo No Chōmei:

Still from the autumn [moon]
Unbidden come a thousand thoughts
To all who gaze,
But mine alone it is to know
The wind in the mountain pines.

Kōetsu's calligraphy here, with alternating thick and thin elements, feels like rain drifting downward against the fuller, upward-flowing forms of clouds and cherry blossoms. Kōetsu responds to a painting, disposing his calligraphy in one way or another, but text and image have their own stories to tell. In the poem cards, the confrontations feel odd yet succinct. Picture and poem are, in their own ways, rivetingly precise; but there is a kind of mental space—a kind of breathing room—that opens up. Space here is fluid, uncharted and unchartable. And that fluidity is like a blast of naturalistic uncertainty that shakes up these stylized, formalized inventions.

In the scrolls, the balance between image and text generally develops in a more relaxed way, as if two great plots are unfolding side by side. In the Kōetsu-Sōtatsu collaboration known as the Deer scroll, calligrapher and painter seem to wander by one another, and although there are no poems about deer, these animals are traditionally associated with autumn and loneliness, which are themes in many of the poems. The deer, with their branching antlers and slim legs, are like animated calligraphic elements that play hide-and-seek with the lyrics. In the Crane scroll, another Kōetsu-Sōtatsu collaboration, the birds, a flood of silver silhouettes, suggest a visual analogue to the turning of the seasons and the comings and goings of love that are discussed in poems by the Thirty-Six Immortal Poets, whose work was compiled in the eleventh century. Here the cranes are a surging, anti-gravitational presence, pressing now at the top edge of the scroll, now at the bottom edge. They seem restless even when, from time to time, they alight.

Great art creates its own logic, to which museumgoers can respond even when, as in the present instance, they are looking at poems written in an unfamiliar language in an elaborate script that is a reach even for many native speakers. One may not be able to read what Kōetsu has written, but one can see, almost instinctively, that he gives older artisanal values a modern daring. He loves the collaborative process, with its unpredictable give-and-take. Working with the master papermaker Kamishi Sōji, he designed scrolls that combine lengths of differently colored papers. When Kōetsu's scrolls were not covered with painted images before he embarked on his calligraphic forays, they were stamped with woodblock prints of vegetation or animals in shimmering mica or in inks of delicate silver and gold. The contrast between the printed surfaces, with their slight poolings of ink, and the smoother, more absorbent strokes of Kōetsu's brush makes for an unexpected kind of textural excitement.

For Kōetsu art was not a one-track professional commitment; it was a way of registering through a whole variety of media his intense engagement with Heian poetry, with high-art traditions, with Nō theater, with the tea ceremony, with nature itself. Kōetsu's scrolls and poem cards and lacquer writing boxes and ceramic teabowls were not made to be held at a distance. They were meant to be embraced as part of a full life. In *The Tale of Genji*, the Heian period novel that Kōetsu and his friends admired, everybody is always writing and reading poems,

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or observing the changing weather, or commenting on the quality of the calligraphy in a letter that they have just received. Art and nature are as essential as—and all mixed up with—friendship and gossip and love. This sense of art and life as being tumbled together was something that Kōetsu wanted to revive.

In looking back to Heian times, Kōetsu might seem to run the risk of aesthetic preciosity, but it turns out that his overlapping obsessions gave his work a sinewy urgency. Poems and Nō libretti were made to be recited, so that Kōetsu's calligraphy could become an extension of, and a spur to, speech. His ceramics were designed to be held, to be drunk from; what looks odd or awkward in his teabowls may feel natural to fingers or lips. In 1615, Kōetsu was given by the Shogun a considerable piece of land in an area called Takagamine, in northwestern Kyoto. There, up until his death in 1637, he was the center of a sort of combined artists' colony and spiritual retreat for the Hokke sect of Buddhism, which emphasizes the possibility of happiness in the here-and-now. From these years come Buddhist texts that are Kōetsu's most restrained calligraphic productions, but also the mighty abandon of his eccentrically off-balance teabowls.

Again and again, Kōetsu achieves an amazing, loose-knit clarity. Floating over Sōtatsu's gold and silver paintings, his calligraphic inventions suggest the extravagance of high-spirited conversations conducted over glasses of champagne. Kōetsu is obviously a master of the calligrapher's craft, but ultimately he is not so much a calligrapher—or a ceramicist—as he is a hybrid, an artist-impresario. The type has no precise parallel in the West. Perhaps it was unusual in the East as well. Kōetsu was not involved only in developing luxurious printed versions of Nō libretti; he was involved also in the chanting of these texts. The lacquer ware that he helped to design includes containers for drawing implements and a box to hold one hundred Nō plays, which was decorated with the titles of the plays, arranged randomly. A lacquer shelf is decorated with elements—a pine branch, a fan—that evoke specific chapters in Murasaki's novel.

When Kōetsu began to make teabowls, they were for his own use and the use of his family and friends. Perhaps the tea ceremony, with which Kōetsu became increasingly involved in his later years, is a key to the fluidity of his artistic vision, for the idea of this was to give an ordinary experience—in this case, having refreshments with friends—a complex aesthetic meaning. It is important to remember that in Kōetsu's day the tea ceremony as a highly organized affair was perhaps a hundred years old—relatively new, in other words, at least in comparison to the Heian culture that also fascinated him. And the informal Raku ceramics which Kōetsu began to create had first been produced sometime in the sixteenth century.

For Kōetsu, the tea ceremony may have had a modern aura. The tea masters, of whom Kōetsu knew several, were both artists and impresarios, and the ritual that they orchestrated in elegantly modest interiors gave the simplest acts an intricate, ceremonial bearing. The tea ceremony is an artistic reimagining of seemingly mundane matters that turns real time and real space into a magical realm. When Kōetsu began to create his own teabowls, he was responding to that tradition of lingering over simple things until they take on a lyric intricacy. His teabowls, with their bluntly built forms and abstractly brushed glazes which some people believe evoke snow and mist, are Diogenes's cup, only aestheticized.

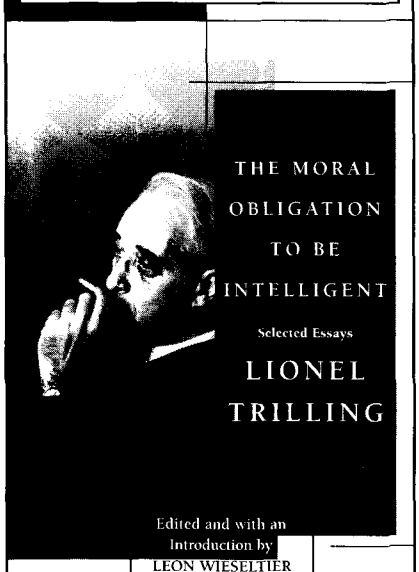
At "The Arts of Hon'ami Kōetsu" we get to know a calligrapher who was so in love with the tactility of materials that he could not ultimately resist sinking his hands deep into the primordial clay. His bowls have a scruffy aplomb, but they have a lightness, too. Kōetsu is a strikingly experimental traditionalist. He extracts from Heian refinements a nerviness and an energy that propel him forward. His work in transferring his calligraphic line into movable type interestingly explodes the uniqueness of his own images. In at least one instance, his calligraphy was transferred to woodblocks and printed on a scroll. While I was looking at this scroll in Philadelphia, I overheard one visitor say to another: "It's absurd to turn calligraphy into print; it violates the spirit of the calligraphy." I saw the point of that remark, and yet I also saw that Kōetsu might have been intrigued by the visual dissonance that was set off by this transformation.

Since so many of Kōetsu's works are too delicate to be exposed to light and air for prolonged periods of time, a considerable number of the objects in "The Arts of Hon'ami Kōetsu" have had to be changed halfway through the exhibition's run. In some instances new works have been substituted, in other instances scrolls have been rolled and album pages turned, thus revealing new compositions. I would say that the second phase of the show, which includes the amazing Crane scroll from the Kyoto National Museum, is marginally superior, but I do not really want to choose.

For scholars, certainly, this show has to be a capital event. Fragments of scrolls dismantled in the past have been reunited;

The Moral Obligation to be Intelligent

Selected Essays
Lionel Trilling
Edited and with an Introduction by
Leon Wieseltier



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and there are opportunities to compare calligraphy at closer range than heretofore. But the needs of the public have also been honored. The wall texts are excellent, and the translations of all the poems in Kōetsu's calligraphies are close at hand. I regret only that some of the general essays in the beautifully produced catalogue are not stronger. Edwin A. Cranston's essay on the poem cards is a good introduction to the complex relationship between image and text, but elsewhere the contributors wobble, uncertain as to how to lay out the historical and technical groundwork. The generalizations tend to be overly broad, the specifics not always clear. The catalogue could have used a good general overview of calligraphic practice and a glossary of technical terms.

Still, the exhibition is perfection. Felice Fischer and the designers at the Philadelphia Museum, Jack Schlechter and Andrew Slavinskas, have presented a great deal of complex material in three galleries that feel elegant, clean-lined, uncrowded. I cannot recall ever seeing a more beautifully installed show. There are no cheap shots, no silly atmospheric touches. The curator and the designers were obviously confident that Kōetsu, if left to his own devices, could connect with the public. They were right. Needless to say, this is no blockbuster; but on the weekdays when I visited there were always people in the galleries, and they seemed fully engaged, the way people did in New York a couple of months ago at the Chardin show. Here, once again, is proof that when a museum presents extraordinary material straightforwardly, the public will come.

In recent years there have been a number of formidable retrospectives at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, especially the exhibitions devoted to Cézanne and Brancusi. As remarkable as those events were, museumgoers knew that if they had not been done in Philadelphia they would have been done somewhere else; both shows, indeed, were collaborations between several institutions. But "The Arts of Hon'ami Kōetsu," a Philadelphia exclusive, is an event of an altogether different order. The in-depth focus on an artist largely unknown to the American museumgoing public makes this a daringly original retrospective. And at a time when museums tend to go for the surefire hit, the fact that Kōetsu is in Philadelphia says much about the perspicacity of a formidable curator and the strong support of a major museum. At "The Arts of Hon'ami Kōetsu" we get to know a great artist, our sense of what art can do is deepened, we glimpse the world in new ways. In thirty years I have seen no exhibition of Asian art that comes close to this one. ■

Liberalism and Stubbornness

By GORDON S. WOOD

On Hallowed Ground: Abraham Lincoln and the Foundations of American History by John Patrick Diggins

(Yale University Press, 352 pp., $27.95)

FOR THE PAST thirty years or so, John Patrick Diggins has carried out a relentless intellectual campaign against New Left historians and all those whom he thinks have foolishly promised to deliver us from our modern liberal predicament. In response he has been booed and scorned and called many names. Some have called him "a closet Catholic," others "some kind of Calvinist" or even "a conservative." Still others have labeled him "a troublemaker," or someone who spends his time "throwing cold water" on new schools of thought in American history-writing.

This last charge seems to have clarified things for Diggins. Finally, he says, he is coming to accept his "peculiar situation in the field of intellectual history" as "a cold water historian." He now sees his role as one of dousing all the isms of recent times that seek to use history to destroy all that is central and exceptional about America—its persistent and deeply-rooted liberal tradition.

Marxism was the first of the isms to challenge liberalism, and it had an enormous influence on history-writing in the 1960s. So in the 1970s Diggins felt compelled to write several articles and two books criticizing the new social history, with its Marxist categories of thought and its futile desire to rid the world of private property. As Marxism began to fade in the 1980s, a second ism arose to take its place: classical republicanism, which promised to subordinate private interests to the spirit of civic virtue. Like Marxism, this republicanism seemed to offer radical scholars an ideological alternative to liberal capitalism, but one that was homegrown and endorsed by the Founding Fathers. Once again Diggins felt challenged by what he saw as a misinterpretation of American history, and so he wrote *The Lost Soul of American Politics* (1984), in which he denied the applicability of classical republicanism to American history.

Then, in the 1990s, scholars and thinkers such as Richard Rorty tried to revive the older tradition of American pragmatism in an attempt to solve the problems created by a cruel and selfish liberalism. Pragmatism promised a world beyond competition, a world of cooperation and community governed by "intelligence." Again Diggins responded by writing and editing several works exposing the inability of pragmatism to move American liberalism beyond its own limitations. And now, more recently, two new isms have risen to challenge the dominance of liberalism in American thought: multiculturalism and post-structuralism. *On Hallowed Ground* is Diggins's retort to these latest attempts to distort our understanding of America's past by masking the reality of America's liberal tradition.

America, Diggins wants us to understand, is liberal through and through. After all the masks, all the isms, are peeled away, there remains liberalism and only liberalism at the core of American culture. And any attempt to deny this elementary fact of American life is only a snare and a delusion. America's liberalism "cannot imagine a possibility beyond itself." It "has no second act in history because it cannot liberate itself from itself."

By liberalism, Diggins means "a body of ideas that regards matter and property, comprehended by mind and conscience, as elementary and irreducible realities and views liberty and natural rights as the means by which happiness is pursued and freedom protected." This body of liberal ideas, he says, can be traced largely to the seventeenth-century philosopher John

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Locke, who first included in the meaning of property the value of the labor that went into creating that property. Locke is everywhere in Diggins's book, usually as a metonym for liberalism, but often as an authentic historical figure personally influencing American thought. (Since Locke attacked patriarchy, Diggins calls him "the first male feminist.") Diggins suggests that the seventeenth-century Locke spoke more directly to Abraham Lincoln and the nineteenth century than did Thomas Jefferson.

Although this Lockean liberalism requires a constitutional representative government based on majority rule, it is not necessarily identified with particular methods of governing or particular political policies. It is certainly not identical to the liberalism that is used in current political discourse, as the opposite of American conservatism. Indeed, Diggins's liberalism embraces the main ideas of both present-day political parties; some might even say that it has more in common with the Republican Party than with the Democratic Party.

Although Diggins has often been called a conservative or a neoconservative, he disavows these titles. He insists that he is a realistic and reluctant liberal who has come to accept ambition, competition, and the pursuit of self-interest as ineluctable facts of life. Indeed, Diggins's Lockean liberal world sometimes seems little different from the world of Hobbes. It is a world of self-aggrandizement and an endless struggle for power, which Diggins associates with the acquisition of wealth and the promotion of self-interest. Since "democracy and power are mutually exclusive concepts," democracy does not have much to do with this kind of power. But freedom does: "freedom is inseparable from power—the power to acquire and exclude, but also the power to rise up and participate."

Diggins seems to think of democracy as the passive and formal expression of public opinion, in contrast to the informal use of liberal power in the backrooms where the real action is. That is why, he says, the women's movement that concentrated on simply gaining the suffrage was so ineffectual. It chose democracy instead of power and self-interest. The lesson for blacks and other excluded groups, he says, is the same. In liberal America, interest groups "have to circumvent democracy to realize some measure of power."

DIGGINS'S LOCKEAN LIBERALISM is a doctrine of ambition, hard work, respect for property, and freedom from political, social, and ecclesiastical authority. He is especially interested in liberalism's defiance of authority. He suggests that "perhaps Walter Lippman gave the best definition of liberalism when he described it as the overthrow of authority and the endless search for its surrogate." Diggins himself certainly has been searching throughout his adult life for something solid to believe in.

Ever since he lost his faith in Roman Catholicism in the 1950s, he has been engaged in a tireless search for authority in a world where no authority seems to exist. His uncompromising attacks on the isms of our time are attacks on false gods that would set themselves up as authorities. After years of looking for authority, Diggins says, all he could find was power, and thus he has given up searching.

In his earlier book on "the lost soul of American politics," Diggins seemed utterly pessimistic about the desolate and alienated world that he uncovered in liberal America. The only solution that he could imagine was some kind of religious redemption that would come from our acknowledging the selfishness and the power that lie at the heart of our liberalism. In his new book, however, he seems less pessimistic and more accepting of the stark and power-laden liberalism that constitutes our culture, largely through the influence of his hero Lincoln. Even today, he says, Lincoln retains a marvelous authority among Americans. "Consider the contrast between him and recent occupants of the White House: on the one side homeliness, humility, self-doubt, magnanimity, and the need to know the right; on the other, slickness, hubris, self-righteousness, and the need to know the ratings."

WITH THE BROODING presence of Lincoln at his side, Diggins seems to have come to terms with the terrifying liberal reality of America. If Lincoln, "the most profound president in American history," could accept, indeed endorse, the liberal world of ambition, interests, and power, then why cannot we all? Like Lincoln, however, we must ground our acceptance in a sense of our own guilt and sinfulness, and in a common moral foundation perhaps best expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the timeless ideals of the American Revolution.

As a politician, says Diggins, Lincoln may have been a pragmatist willing to adjust his policies to different circumstances. "As a philosopher, however, he was a moralist, and even an absolutist, unswerving in his belief that ... [the] meaning of right and wrong is not relative and dependent on time and place." Without such a belief in an absolute and timeless moral foundation, all politics, Lincoln realized, would become simply a struggle for power, and America would be unable

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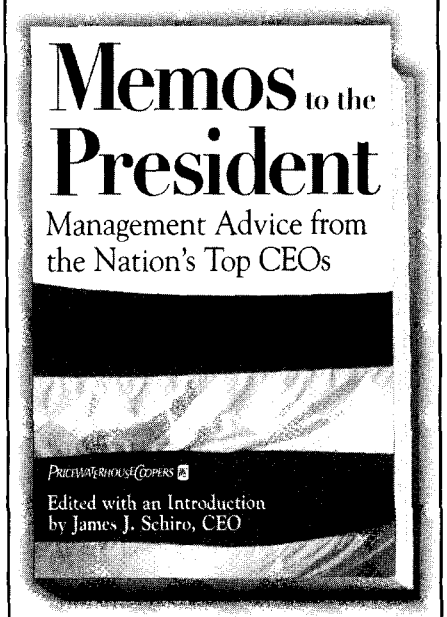
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even to recognize the goals it was failing to achieve. Many present-day scholars dismiss America's liberal consensus as merely a product of the supposedly complacent and conservative decade of the 1950s, but Lincoln knew that the liberal oneness of America was deeply rooted in its history. "A Lockean liberal with a Calvinist conscience, Lincoln believed that the Republic could be both explained and guided by a unifying principle."

Lincoln, in Diggins's account, had a vision of America as a whole, and saw unanimity coming out of the many conflicts of American life. Unlike modern radical historians who mock patriotism and any attempt to see American values as exceptional, Lincoln believed in patriotism, in America's exceptionalism, and in the unifying consensus of its liberal values. "In his patriotic nationalism, in his liberal dedication to work and opportunity for all, and in his religious devotion to justice, charity, and magnanimity," Diggins writes, "American history reached its most sublime synthesis."

Diggins thinks of himself as an intellectual historian, but in fact he is not a historian at all. He is, rather, a cultural critic who uses history to make his points about our contemporary culture. The fact that he dedicates his book to Louis Hartz and Christopher Lasch, fellow cultural critics who also used history to challenge Americans to come to terms with the nature of their society, is significant. Diggins seems to feel a special kinship with what he calls "the pilgrimage of Louis Hartz," and he spends a lot of time discussing and praising Hartz and his book, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (1955). This is not surprising, for he has the same reductionist conception of Lockean liberalism as Hartz.

Hartz argued, following Tocqueville, that Americans did not have to experience a European-type revolution. With the seventeenth-century migrations from the Old World, the colonists left feudalism and aristocracy behind. And since they were born equal, they did not have to become equal. The result was that America was saddled with a liberal ideology of individualistic and private-property-loving capitalism that could not be shaken off and that limited its ability to understand the world. Hartz was not endorsing this consensus of Lockean liberalism, as is sometimes thought; he was simply telling Americans that this is what they thought and there was not much that anyone could do about it. In the end, Hartz could only flee from this suffocating liberal consensus; until his death in 1986 he became a seeker wandering through the non-Western world.

RATHER THAN FLEE this liberal consensus, Diggins wants to fight on its behalf against its many enemies, most of whom are now on the left. Thus the bulk of his angry and agitated book deals with the mistaken ways in which many contemporary historians have interpreted American history. Seeing everything through the matrix of a Hartz-like Lockean liberalism, Diggins finds most of recent history-writing severely wanting. Since he jumps about from the Revolution to America's identity, from exceptionalism to citizenship, from the purpose of history-writing to Tocqueville, from the Frankfurt School to Cold War intellectuals, his book is really much more a collection of short, desultory and often repetitive discussions than a cohesive whole. Still, Diggins's honesty and earnestness hold it together.

Perhaps nothing that New Left historians have recently done to manipulate the past has irritated Diggins more than the *National Historical Standards*, a controversial document produced in 1994 by the National Center for History at UCLA as a guideline for state education departments in the teaching of history. In their strenuous effort to deemphasize the influence of all the white male leaders and capture the nation's diversity of race, ethnicity, class, and gender, the authors of those standards, according to Diggins, have distorted the story of America and have sought to undermine its liberal foundations.

Diggins presumes that the reader has read Lynne Cheney's assault on the *Stan-*

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dards, and consequently he offers us very few examples of the distortions. Indeed, throughout the book he assumes that his reader is already familiar with much of the political correctness in historical interpretation that he is railing against, whether it is the controversy over the *Enola Gay* exhibit or the flourishing of post-colonial studies. He gives us some examples from the writings of Gary Nash, Eric Foner, Joan Scott, and others, but not as many as would be needed to convince a lay reader. More telling, perhaps, are some of Diggins's personal anecdotes: one from a history conference where he was hissed for endorsing patriotism; another from a visit to an eleventh-grade classroom in San Francisco, where the walls were covered with images of foreign revolutionaries, black leaders, anarchists, Native Americans, and Cesar Chavez and Eugene Debs, but not George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, or Abraham Lincoln.

Everywhere Diggins sees the influence of a generation of scholars who not only deny that America has a distinct historical identity with a consensus of political values, but also are uneasy with any expression of old-fashioned patriotism. "In certain parts of the contemporary academic world, to oppose multiculturalism in support of national unity is tantamount to advocating oppression and domination." Not that Diggins has any brief for conservative flag-waving patriots who distort the past for their own political purposes. Like many radical scholars, in his view, conservatives, have concocted an equally imaginary golden age where community and virtue thrived. Still, in his call for a history that teaches the development of human freedom instead of one that teaches only ethnic, racial, or gender self-esteem, he is clearly on the side of the conservatives in the culture war.

SINCE DIGGINS IS not really a historian, he does not have a historian's feel for the complexity, the nuances, the contexts, and the differentness of the past. He thinks of history as a social scientist might think of it: as a source for generalizations about human behavior that transcend time and place. "To study history," he says, "is to study events in order to understand how similar conditions lead to similar effects." But in reality historians seek to study past events not to make transhistorical generalizations about human behavior, but to understand those events as they actually were, in all their peculiar contexts and circumstances.

Diggins is so eager to counter what he sees as the moral relativity and the skepticism of the present that he cannot accept the historian's instinctive assumption that all human thought and action are the

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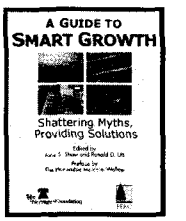

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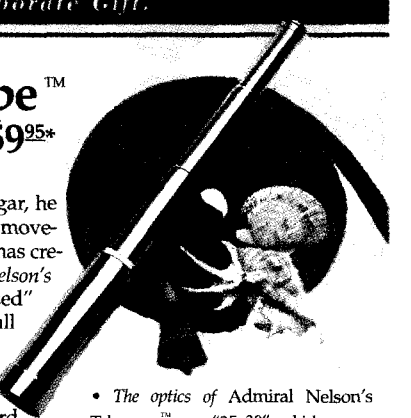

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products of particular historical circumstances. Instead, like many conservative political theorists, he dismisses the radical contextualism of most historians. He wants to telescope time and to lump things together and to reduce complexities to simple absolutisms. He wishes to hold onto some trans-historical truths, some eternal or universal judgments, that defy time and place. Otherwise, he fears, we will cut loose from Lincoln's moral absolutisms, and fall into the modern abyss of skepticism and nihilism.

SINCE LINCOLN WAS preoccupied with the American Revolution, Diggins is preoccupied with it, too, and he writes at length about it. Like Hartz, Diggins assumes that America had a liberal consensus from its beginnings in the seventeenth century, and so he necessarily believes that the Revolution could not have changed much. The America of 1760 could not have been very different from the America of 1820. Convinced that the Revolution was a conservative movement, he dismisses out of hand any evidence suggesting that it might have been a radical break from the colonial past. Even "the depictions of the many ways the colonists struggled to free themselves from all dependency relations, structures of authority, positions of subordination, and other modes of submission," he claims, "can hardly be described as revolutionary."

Apparently the only revolutions that Diggins recognizes as truly revolutionary are those like the French and Russian revolutions, in which all order and property and religion are violently overthrown. "If America had a radical revolution, where are its traces?," he asks. He does not consider the replacement of "the rule of monarchy" by "the rule of money" to be revolutionary, when in fact that was precisely what was revolutionary about the Revolution, as Joyce Appleby recently demonstrated in *Inheriting the Revolution*. Like many New Left historians, but not like Marx himself, Diggins cannot imagine that a revolution that creates a liberal, middle-class, egalitarian, rights-obsessed society could ever be a radical event.

Since America's Lockean liberalism has always been with us, even the radical idea of the Declaration of Independence that Lincoln emphasized—that all men are created equal—had to be a part of American history from the beginning. Since Locke offered a labor theory of value in the seventeenth century, Diggins assumes that everyone in the eighteenth century must have valued work in a modern liberal way. But, in fact, one of the consequences of the Revolution was a new conception of work that helped to separate the North from the South in the decades following the Declaration of Independence. Diggins concedes that the Southern slave-holding planters were a real leisured aristocracy, but he cannot explain where they came from ("aristocrats don't migrate," he says), or why they became a beleaguered slave-ridden minority by the 1820s. In 1776, after all, the South, despite its slave-holding, correctly saw itself as the heart and soul of the new nation. But, by the 1820s, it had already lost control of the nation and the nation's identity to the rapidly developing democratic, liberal, egalitarian, and work-obsessed North. Diggins is unable to see that most of the antebellum South was still living culturally in the eighteenth century and did not share the newly created liberalism of the North, and for this reason he cannot explain the Civil War any more than Louis Hartz could explain it.

DIGGINS IS NOT ALONE, of course, in his belief that the American Revolution was little more than a colonial rebellion. Other historians share many of his interpretations of early American history. But what about his passionate criticisms of what the New Left historians have been doing? How seriously should we take them? He is certainly correct in indicting much of the New Left writing that sees American history as simply a tale of domination and genocide. Such overstatements only convince the public that academics are even more ridiculous than it thought they were.

No doubt Diggins is correct, too, in criticizing the fashionable multicultural emphasis on ethnic, racial, and gender identities at the expense of people's identities as American citizens. Such multicultural emphases not only fragment our understanding of America's past, they also make that past irrelevant for everyone whose ancestors were not personally part of it—a serious problem for a nation of immigrants. Although Martin Luther King Jr. and the great black singer Marian Anderson could easily and emotionally relate to "My Country 'Tis of Thee," with its celebration of the "Land of the pilgrim's pride," Donna E. Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services and a former professor and university president, cannot. "My grandparents came from Lebanon," Shalala has said. "I don't identify with the pilgrims at the personal level."

Still, despite these kinds of multicultural perversions of our historical understanding, no American historian would want to eliminate all the superb works of history of the past generation that have resulted from the influence of the New Left historians—works that have forever illuminated our understanding of slavery, African American life, women, Indians, and ordinary working people of all sorts. It is true that these histories have often come at the expense of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and the other great white men of our past; but surely those illustrious figures will continue to command the attention of both historians and the general public. There have been many foolish excesses and a great deal of dross in the new social and cultural history of the past generation that will soon mercifully be forgotten, but there has been also much good work for others to build on.

Diggins is no doubt correct as well in charging that many New Left scholars are contemptuous of present-day American society, and that they attempt to use their history-writing to reform it. What he fails to note is that they seldom achieve the effects that they desire. Often their efforts are overwhelmed by the very powerful liberal consensus that Diggins has taken such pains to describe. Indeed, it is hard to see why Diggins is so anxious about all the various isms that presumably threaten America's liberal consensus. If liberalism is as strong and resilient as he says, it should have nothing to fear from all these threats.

AND IN FACT Diggins says as much, more than once. None of the many challenges, he writes, has "made a dent on the omnipresence of liberalism in American history and American life." New Left historians believe that recovering the stories of those left out of history—workers, blacks, women, Indians—will somehow subvert the old liberal consensus; but, as Diggins points out, this falsely assumes "that those who had been excluded from the synthesis represented a challenge to it." To the dismay of many New Left scholars, it turns out that most of these hitherto marginalized groups want only to participate in the great liberal bonanza and are eager to use liberal power to do so. "Multiculturalists, feminists, Marxists, and other radical activists may see themselves in conflict with the values of liberalism, but are they not actually steeped in it in their common ambition for power and position in the name of 'rights'?" As Diggins concludes in one of his many aphorisms, "few live for liberalism, but many live off of it."

Despite all of his fears that we have "lost the culture war to the forces of multiculturalism," Diggins seems to be flogging a dying if not dead horse. Except for its use in the race problem, which seems beyond solution in the way that it is presently construed, multiculturalism is fading, if not in academia then at least among the population as a whole. Recent Asian and Hispanic immigrants seem to have accepted and endorsed the liberal American dream

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even more readily than immigrants of the early-twentieth century. As Orlando Patterson recently pointed out, "America continues to absorb vast numbers of newcomers from everywhere, and contrary to what multiculturalists imagine, they stay for the sheer liberation of living where they can get any job if they have the skills, can marry across any ethnic or cultural boundary and can live pretty nearly anywhere they want if they can afford to."

What this suggests is that history is not as weak a foundation for morality as Diggins and others who fear the relativism of a historical attitude believe. The pragmatic view that there is no knowledge outside experience does not imply that anything goes. Lincoln did not have to believe that the Declaration of Independence was God-given in order to ground its moral messages of liberty and equality in firm foundations. The history of the American Revolution and the experience of Americans in the decades leading up to the Civil War would have been—in fact, were—sufficiently strong foundations for Lincoln's beliefs.

The historical experience of a whole people is much tougher, much more tenacious, and much more resistant to the fashions and the fads of intellectuals and historians than Diggins sometimes imagines. No doubt interpretations of America's past have changed and will continue to change; but no one is really free to interpret that past merely as he or she would like. In their choice of interpretations, historians are limited by the past itself, not only by the raw experience of the past but also by the conventions, the values, and the meanings that it has passed on. Despite a generation of writing, as Diggins himself has conceded, the New Left historians have not been able to change the basic contours of our liberal faith as much as they had hoped. History is much more powerful than the historians who would reform it. ■

Enquivering

By SIMON BLACKBURN

Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning) by Martin Heidegger translated by Parvis Enad and Kenneth Maly

(Indiana University Press, 369 pp., $39.50)

I.

IF YOU ARE a believer, then Martin Heidegger was an unparalleled modern thinker, whose profound diagnosis of the condition of mankind in the twentieth century rightly dominated large tracts of culture, and directed the finest subsequent work in the humanities. If you are not, then he is a dismal windbag, whose influence has been completely disastrous, and whose affinity with the Nazis merely indicates the vacuum where, in most other philosophers, there would have been a combination of common sense and common decency.

SIMON BLACKBURN is the Edna J. Koury Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the University of North Carolina, and the author of *Think* (Oxford University Press).

Neither view allows much compromise. But it was not always so. In his early career Heidegger worked on themes in post-Kantian philosophy, such as the relation between psychology and logic, that were common to all European philosophers and that still plague us today. Shortly after *Being and Time* was published in 1927, the level-headed (and later hard-boiled) Oxford philosopher Gilbert Ryle wrote a long, penetrating, and moderately admiring review of it in the philosophical journal *Mind*. Ryle highlighted the influence of Husserl and Brentano in the work; Husserl especially had developed the technique of "phenomenological analysis," which approached traditional problems of mind and body, perception and knowledge, by concentrating upon states of mind and their objects. Since all human knowledge involves some state of mind, this subject could claim a philosophically fundamental position. The urgent question, for Husserl, concerns the right method for isolating what is essential to states of mind in the first place.

For such a philosophy there is a danger of collapsing the whole world into the world of consciousness—the danger of idealism. The early Heidegger attempted to overcome residual traces of idealism in the work of Husserl by denying any split between consciousness and its objects. This is an orthodox and reputable philosophical project, though whether it succeeds in avoiding idealism depends entirely on how it is done. Heidegger's approach was certainly original, since eradicating the split, in his view, meant abandoning almost all the vocabulary that anyone might use to talk about the mind or the world. It meant returning to the primeval springs of Meaning and Being, unencumbered by the terminology of philosophy, science, or everyday life, and starting afresh. In Heidegger's vision, we must no longer think in terms of a self, as owner of experiences, with separate and independent things strewn around the self in space and time. We must recover a lost primordial unity in which such divisions did not exist.

In Heidegger's opinion, then, normal consciousness, expressed with the inherited vocabulary of common sense, sees things "only with a squint," as Ryle put it. The primary consciousness, on the other hand, is consciousness of the world in which we live as agents. It is an awareness of what we are about. Thus our primary awareness of objects is as things "to hand," ready to use. In this kind of living, the "scientific" split between mind and body, self and world, utterly vanishes. It is not very clear, in *Being and Time*, how this happens: as Ryle remarked, the result smells a little oddly both of the pragmatism of William James and the mysticism of Meister Eckhart.

In the 1920s, phenomenology was not sharply separated from other philosophy, on the Continent or in the Anglo-American tradition. Husserl was carefully studied by Bertrand Russell. Phenomenological technique demands a serious concentration on the nature of lived experience, which has always been a goal of philosophy. But the same could be said of literature and poetry; and it is no accident that the best-known offspring of the method are the literary works of Sartre or Camus rather than the philosophical work of, say, Merleau-Ponty. Yet Heidegger set out in a very different direction. Ryle noted an alarming tendency toward unintelligibility even in Heidegger's early work, and this is the tendency that blossomed. He drifted away from the connection with phenomenology, just as he repudiated Husserl, in order to develop

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himself neither as a philosopher nor as a poet, but as an oracle.

Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning) is a translation, into something very remote from English, of philosophical notebooks that Heidegger wrote in the 1920s, in something fairly remote from German. The distance from English is evidently greater than the distance from German, not only because English is more resistant to the encrustations of philosophical German but also because, unfortunately, the translators seem to enjoy trampling on this fact. The title itself illustrates the problem. The German *vom Ereignis* would have translated into English as "from happening," or "on happening." *Ereignis* itself lacks any connotations of "taking possession," which presumably would be what "enown" would suggest were it a word in English, which it is not.

Perhaps there is a point in inserting the idea of ownership? No, for we are also instructed to strip the word "own" of any connotation of possession, which is not entirely easy to do. And if the waters have risen pretty far by this point, they threaten to drown us altogether when we find that almost any English verb will accept the prefix "en": throughout the text some things are enthought, while others enquiver, enbeckon, ensuffer, and encleave. What seems to be random hyphenation further dislocates, or dis-locates, any sense of being at home, or being-at-home, with the words on the page. Sometimes this results in unintended comedy: Heidegger is fond of saying that things we cannot do anything about are thrown at us, and for some pages this leads to talk of a "free-throw," giving the surprising impression that the subject of this metaphysics is basketball.

The translators do present a defense: "Since no one has the slightest idea how *Contributions* would have looked had Heidegger smoothed out its syntax, no one has any idea of the measure by which to 'reproach' him for the present shape of this work." And they proceed to quote approvingly another believer who observes that "it is not a question of reproaching Heidegger or of demanding posthumously different ways of behaving. Rather, it is we who come after him who are put to the test because of our access to his Nachlass and to all of his works." Here is faith indeed. I particularly relish the term "reproach," whose slightly droopy moralistic overtones are hardly adequate to describing the more robust reactions of unbelievers.

For the writing in this book is startling, whatever your prior view of Heidegger. Open any page and you are apt to find something like this:

> Time-space is the enowned encleavage of the turning trajectories of enowning, of the turning between belongingness and the call, between abandonment by being and enbeckoning (the enquivering of the resonance of be-ing itself!).

"Cleavage," at least, is defined for us:

> The cleavage is the inner, incalculable settledness of en-ownment; of the essential swaying of be-ing as the midpoint that is used and that grants belonging—the midpoint that continues to be related to the passing of god and the history of man at the same time.

As we have seen, "en-ownment" might give trouble, but here, too, help is to hand (*zuhanden*):

> The enowning of en-ownment gathers within itself the de-cision (*Entscheidung*): that freedom, as the ground that holds to abground, lets a distress emerge from out of which, as from out of the overflow of the ground, gods and man come forth into partedness.

Whatever the merits of phenomenology, by the time we get to this they have certainly evaporated. Instead of problems of logic and psychology, or a close focus on the nature of conscious experience, we are given only a misty sense of uplift, with god and history and resonance and Being all floating up alongside us. One need not be a dry empiricist or an unimaginative positivist to recognize that nothing is said in such sentences that could be verified or falsified, or assessed in any dimension as plausible or not. Yet this lack of content may not even be counted as a flaw, for Heidegger actually instructs us at one point: "Making itself intelligible is suicide for philosophy."

The real point of the writing is therefore different. It becomes apparent when we notice the constant repetitions: "How can distress be effected as distress?" "Enownment always means enowning as en-ownment." "The ground that is the abground and is the ground of gods' lacking the ground." "Be-ing of such essential swaying is itself unique in this essential sway." The truth, then, is that we have here what even Heidegger's respectful biographer, Rüdiger Safranski, describes as a series of mantras. The work is a litany or a rosary, or a barrel-organ. As Adorno charged in *The Jargon of Authenticity*, the effect is supposed to be that "one speaks from a depth which would be profaned if it were called content." We have instead an attempt to create a prophetic aura or mood. We have something that aspires to be a religious work. "Being," we are to realize, "is the trembling of Godding." Oh, goody!

II.

To understand what is going on in Heidegger, you need to know a story. Perhaps it is *the* story, the primal story. It tells of a primordial golden age, when man was united with himself, with his fellow man, and with nature (home, hearth, earth, fatherland, paradise, shelter, innocence, wholeness, integration). Then there was a fall, when primitive innocence and unity were destroyed and replaced by something worse (separation, dissonance, fracture, strife, estrangement, alienation, inauthenticity, anxiety, distress, death, despair, nothing). To cure this condition, a road or journey is needed (pilgrimage, stations, way or *Weg*, *Bildung*, action, will, destiny). The way will need a leader, and the leader is the philosopher of Plato's myth, who first ascends from the shadows of the cave to the sunshine above (seer, prophet, poet, hero). There is a crisis, and then a recovery of primordial unity itself (encounter, epiphany, authenticity, transcendence, apocalypse, consummation, marriage, jubilation). This may end the story, back at its beginning, or the path may spiral on

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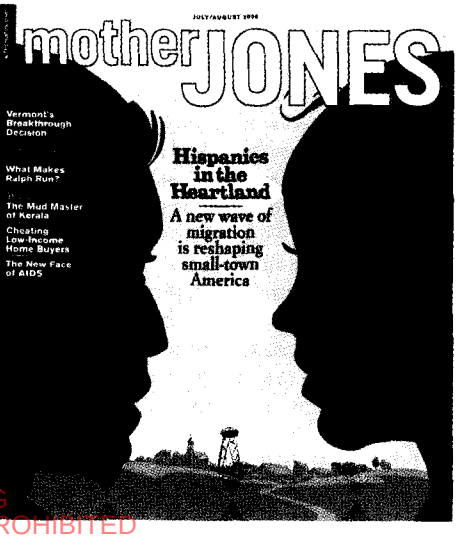
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upwards, its travelers fortified by the necessary sufferings of the journey.

In the story, the world and life itself need interpretation because they are the unfolding of a historical script, the writing of the world-spirit (tidings, message, hermeneutics). And the whole drama is figured not just in the life of an individual, but in universal history, or at least in the history of the race. The story is a history of Prometheus, or Hyperion, or the Prodigal, or the Pilgrim, or the Artist. It is also a history of the evolution of Man, or of *Dasein*, or of the *Geister*.

This is only the template of a story, of course; or to change the metaphor, it is a music that needs different orchestration at different times. It can be given a conventional religious tone, or a purely subjective tone, as with inner-light Protestant mysticism, or for that matter with Shelley or Blake. It can take a nationalistic political setting, or a private and personal setting. The fall may come with knowledge, which involves naming and separating and introducing differences. It can come as it came to ancient Israel, through other lapses, such as the breaking of a covenant, or some may think it came through the invention of capitalism. The hero who leads to the light may be Augustine or Rimbaud, a saint or a decadent.

This music was played loudly more than a century before Heidegger, by Schelling and Schiller, Novalis and Hegel. England took it in through Coleridge and the Romantics; America took it in through Emerson, Whitman, and eventually Hollywood. Even in one artist expressions of the theme can range from the sublime to the ridiculous, from "Tintern Abbey" to what a critic of Wordsworth called the namby-pamby of the Lesser Celandine. It takes genius to play the Romantic music without falsifying it, and perhaps even greater genius to play it with a religious tremolo.

Heidegger's claim to genius was allowed because he grafted onto phenomenology a secular version (or at least a non-Christian and philosophical version) of the primal story. He celebrates the primordial unity, which like many Germans he attributes to the Greeks, and which he locates (for some private reason) in the pre-Socratic philosophers. He laments the fall that has plagued philosophy, science, and everyday life ever since. And he promises the ecstatic recovery that sets eternity into time, the mystical moment in which, as his favorite poet, Hölderlin, said, "the imperishable is present within us."

In the end the romantic epiphany is consummated, the false categorizations of fallen nature are lifted, and the seer wordlessly confronts the underlying realities of Being. But, heavens, the dangers on the way! For Heidegger is clear that there are risks and dangers in attempting to eyeball Being. Wrestling, venturing, confronting, colliding, seized, and always alone, what a hero he is, this fearless Wanderer above the Mist!

TO THE AGNOSTIC eye, the first curiosity in all this is that the execution of the phenomenological method falls considerably short of the promise. For just one example—and from Heidegger's earlier and less messianic period—consider once more our relationship to things around us. He alleges that primordial artisans treat things around them as things to use, whereas scientific thought treats things as objects in space-time. To-handedness (the artisan's concept) is close to conscious human life, or *Dasein*, whereas present-at-handedness (things as thought of scientifically) is distant from it. So the first, *Zuhandenseinheit*, can be announced as "primary form of being" compared to the second, superficial, merely scientific *Vorhandenseinheit*. The first is primordial; the second is derivative and falsifying, suitable only for rude mechanicals such as Newton.

Some have speculated that this captures an essential insight of pragmatism, though Heidegger's distaste for all things scientific sits uneasily with such a reading. In any event, the vital point is that the jargon only conceals a shocking lack of focus in the original thought. For is it not obvious that an artisan who is at work on a piece of carpentry does not see a hammer as a tool as opposed to seeing it as an item in space and time? It is only because he sees it as an enduring object with a location and a shape, inelastic and massive, that he sees it as *zuhanden* at all. Things not seen as having these desirable properties cannot be seen as usable for driving nails.

This is a trivial example of a fuzziness or a vacuity that exists even in the earlier work, and balloons in *Contributions*. Karl Jaspers wrote about Heidegger that he was "among contemporaries the most exciting thinker, masterful, compelling, mysterious—but then leaving you empty-handed." Heidegger's mantras are not expressions of some achieved vision or experience or emotion. They are instructions to work one up. They are not the records of a pilgrimage, but a prospectus into which you can inscribe your own detail. The orchestra is only tuning up. So, in the last part of *Contributions*, when Heidegger presents himself as a prophet out of his time, yet prefiguring the Way for the Ones Who Are To Come, few unbelievers will be reminded of Blake, or even Nietzsche. He sounds utterly trite, like Obi-Wan Kenobi in *Star Wars*.

III.

HEIDEGGER'S FAITHFUL MAY not mind the charge that he leaves us empty-handed, just as he himself heads off complaints about intelligibility. Safranski relates that the physicist Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker told Heidegger the story about a man who spent all his days in a tavern. Asked why, he replied that it was his wife: she talks and talks and talks. "What does she talk about?" "Ah, that she doesn't say." Heidegger is supposed to have replied, "Yes, that is how it is."

If this was a moment of self-knowledge, it cannot have lasted long. In the jargon of authenticity, saying nothing means saying Nothing, and this has a much better ring to it. Saying Nothing requires confronting the very source of care (*Sorge*) itself. It means battling the mechanical age for what it is, and gazing at death, and (en)quivering with the resonances of the void. It takes the poet-philosopher-hero to do it. Only the inauthentic, the dwellers in the shadows, could find that saying Nothing is a disappointment. And this cannot even count as a criticism, since disappointment is just what you should expect when your appointment with Being is not yet due.

No, the knowledge of the philosopher-poet-hero is different:

> This knowing can never be communicated and disseminated like the knowledge of what is extant. Those who bring it to one another must already go in the crossing in that they, intimating decisions, come unto one another and yet do not meet.

Note the Biblical resonances of this description. The dwellers in the shadows, by contrast,

> drag what is ownmost down into what is intelligible and, by such dragging, shove it into what is merely still tolerated and humored.

You have to be good at priest-craft to get away with such an elitist posture, and Heidegger undoubtedly was good at it. There is ample evidence of the charisma that Heidegger could exercise, through sublime self-confidence and messianic self-presentation. The effect was beautifully dissected in a remarkable paper in the *Journal of Philosophy* in 1938, in which Marjorie Glicksman, who attended Heidegger's lectures in the 1930s, records his procedure. She describes the vituperative denunciations of previous philosophers, and Heidegger's own repeated claims to uniqueness and greatness.

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Above all, she describes the aristocratic immunity of those on the summits to criticism from the dwellers in the shadows below, who include any spokesmen for science, history, logic, or common sense:

> It should be added, perhaps, that the forcefulness of Heidegger's "aristocratic" arguments depends in large part on the personality of the lecturer. One is caught as in a political rally by the slow intensity of his speech. The contemptuous epigrams with which he dismisses the protests of logic or good sense sting the listener's ears with their acidity; and his prophetic solemnity when he invokes the quest for being ties one as spellbound as if one were taking his first step into the rituals of the Eleusinian mysteries.

When Heidegger deigns to put his head back in the cave, the results of the wrestling matches and collisions with Being turn out to be a little disappointing. Here is his own version of unity with nature, in a passage quoted by Adorno:

> Recently I got a second invitation to the University of Berlin. On such an occasion I leave the city and go back to my cabin. I hear what the mountains and woods and farmyards say. On the way I drop in on my old friend, a seventy-five-year-old farmer. He has read in the newspaper about the Berlin invitation. What will he say? He slowly presses the sure glance of his clear eyes against mine, holds his mouth tightly closed, lays his faithful and cautious hand on my shoulder—and almost imperceptibly shakes his head. That means: absolutely No!

Surely we must all admire this true man of the *Volk*, so closely resembling Adam Lambsbreath in *Cold Comfort Farm*, "linked to all dumb brutes by a chain forged in soil and sweat": the Swabian peasant as golden retriever. Mind you, gnarly old dog though he be, he still reads university tittle-tattle in the newspapers. They didn't do that around Grasmere.

IV.

MUCH HAS BEEN written about the relationship between Heidegger's philosophy and his support for the Third Reich in the 1930s. Hans Sluga has shown that there was nothing unusual about Heidegger's politics at the time. Many philosophers in Germany in that period subscribed to a quartet of doctrines that made them sympathetic to the National Socialists. They believed that theirs was a time of moral crisis, that the crisis was particular to Germany and needed to be solved in Germany, that the solution called for acts of will directed by a great leader, and that the result would be order—a new order that would last a thousand years.

None of these could be called implications of Heidegger's philosophy, for where there is no certain meaning there are no certain implications. But they make up one way of inscribing detail into the Romantic prospectus. Many of the words that I picked out as thematic in Romanticism fit naturally into this quartet. There is the lost unity, the need for a redemptive journey, the visionary leader, and the goal of a vague and unspecified recovery of what has been lost. National Socialism was one way of orchestrating the primal melody.

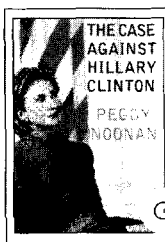
Contributions to Philosophy was written between 1936 and 1938, when Heidegger had ended his active engagement in politics. If, in his earlier rectoral address to the University of Freiburg, he (in Safranski's words) "pull[ed] out all the stops of his penny-dreadful romanticism to lend events an unsuspected profundity," here the tone is different. The philosophical fantasies are detached from National Socialist politics. Heidegger no longer marches his SS-uniformed students out from Freiburg to evangelical camps where they can commune with the hills and the meadows, and the doggy peasants, of the Fatherland. Instead, he "inscribes himself in the history of Being as a herald who arrived too early, and is therefore in danger of being crushed and rejected by his time." National Socialism is no longer seen as the way to reunite Germany with the world of the pre-Socratics. There is too much science and engineering, too little communion with the sources of Being.

But the beast was only sleeping. Jaspers had a Jewish wife, and his relations with Heidegger after the war were naturally wary. Yet Heidegger, astonishingly, wrote to Jaspers in 1952 that the cause of evil was not yet at an end, and that in such a state of homelessness an "advent" was to be expected "whose further hints we may perhaps still experience..." Even the worshipful Jaspers, himself adept at vague religiosity, recoiled from this crassness:

> does not a philosophy that surmizes and poetizes in such phrases in your letter, a philosophy that aroused the vision of the monstrous, once more prepare the ground for the victory of totalitarianism by severing itself from reality?

He was absolutely right to ask the question, and he never got an answer.

So why is Heidegger still an influence, when, say, the infinitely more readable



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Sartre is not? We should be careful here, for outside a very few pockets Heidegger is not really an influence in Anglo-American professional philosophy. He is at best mentioned as a kind of honorary pragmatist, or an honorary precursor of attacks on the dualism of mind and world. In this part of the academy, the view that it is suicide for philosophy to be intelligible is not popular. His influence is mainly felt in the more debilitated areas of the humanities. The legacy is nicely exhibited on the web at *www.elsewhere.org/cgi-bin/postmodern*. Here you can read an original essay, every visit, written by The Postmodernist Generator, a program developed by a student in the Monash University Department of Computer Science and "modified slightly by Pope Dubious Provenance XI using the Dada Engine, a system for generating random text from recursive grammars." The Dada Engine is not quite calibrated to 1930s Heidegger—its lexicon is proper English, for example—but one senses how easily it could be.

Still, there is the question of how it happened and goes on happening. Perhaps the primal story is so potent that just using one of the words that suggest it turns lead to gold. Whenever the modern world looks bad, we hear the lost music, and mourn what might have been. At the faintest sound of the melody, people drop their everyday way of being and dance to the enchantment. It is, as I have suggested, an enchantment into which you can inscribe almost anything. Heidegger can be an icon for the Nazi, the priest, the environmentalist, or the hippie. He may be a defender of the faith, a poet-philosopher for the Society of Jesus, or the naysayer whose rejection of modern mechanical life is a timely, authentic update of that of Carlyle or Ruskin. He can be a pragmatist, or the enemy of dreary technology. All you have to do is accept the prospectus, and inscribe your own fantasy. You must not mind drowning (think of it as the oceanic feeling), and you may need to leave behind any tinge of common sense, science, logic, history, or reason—but these are easy burdens to shed in difficult times. In any event, like any good salvationist, the master has already instructed you to do it, by precept and by example.

Analytical philosophy is sometimes contrasted unfavorably with "Continental" philosophy, because of its supposed lack of political and moral weight. If this charge was ever just, it has long ceased to be so. Indeed, to critics such as Richard Posner, modern Anglo-American philosophy is at fault for being too moralistic, disrespectfully trespassing on the domain of economists and judges. What I think is true is that analytical philosophy is profoundly mistrustful of sustaining myths, including the primal story. We resist the pipes of Pan, because we care about truth. And intelligibility is a precondition of truth. If you cannot tell whether a string of words says anything, you cannot tell whether it says anything true.

This is not a parochial or superficial matter. The love of truth above fog is a commitment that anybody who deserves to be called a philosopher has to make, though it will set him or her at odds with a politics, from the left or the right, that can flourish only in a fog. Fortunately, even in Heidegger's perturbed times there were those who saw this. We may recall the contemporary words of the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce:

> I have now at last read the whole of Heidegger's address, which is stupid and servile at the same time. I am not surprised at the success his philosophizing will have for some time—the vacuous and general is always successful. But it produces nothing. I too believe that he will have no effect on politics, but he dishonors philosophy, and that is a pity also for politics, especially future politics. ■

Love and the City

By NATHAN GLAZER

The Seduction of Place: The City in the Twenty-First Century by Joseph Rykwert

(Pantheon Books, 283 pp., $27.50)

New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: America's Global Cities by Janet L. Abu-Lughod

(University of Minnesota Press, 580 pp., $39.95)

JOSEPH RYKWERT IS a distinguished architectural historian whose previous books have dealt with such subjects as the course of architecture and architectural thought from the Renaissance to the nineteenth century (*The First Moderns*), the role of the classical orders—Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and the like—in the history of architecture (*The Dancing Column*), and the city in the ancient classical world of Greece and Rome (*The Idea of a Town*). Such a background might lead anyone to look at the disordered and sprawling and scarcely planned contemporary city with alarm, and indeed Rykwert does refer to his book as a "polemic." But what he is for and what he is against are not fully spelled out and not easy to grasp.

One easy target is modernism in architecture and planning, and what it has done to the contemporary city. Rykwert does begin his book with an account of how cities were rebuilt after World War II, in part under the influence of modernism in architecture and planning, and he is not at all happy with the result. (Who is?) "The International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM)," Rykwert remarks, "the organization that had promoted the ideas that motivated most of the planners and architects of the immediate postwar years, came under attack from within. At its tenth meeting in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, it broke up." It is hardly necessary to note the irony in the location: a city such as Dubrovnik, which all modern architects and planners admire, could never have emerged or been built under the guidelines of the CIAM.

But Rykwert knows too much simply to fulminate against modernism. Architects and planners have to work under the restraints imposed by economics and politics, and it is too simple to ascribe our unhappiness with contemporary cities to their designers. Yet it is also too easy simply to denounce the profit-maximizing builders and the developers, and Rykwert does not leap to such an explanation

NATHAN GLAZER is Professor of Sociology and Education Emeritus, Harvard University, and the editor, with Mark Lilla, of *The Public Face of Architecture* (Free Press).

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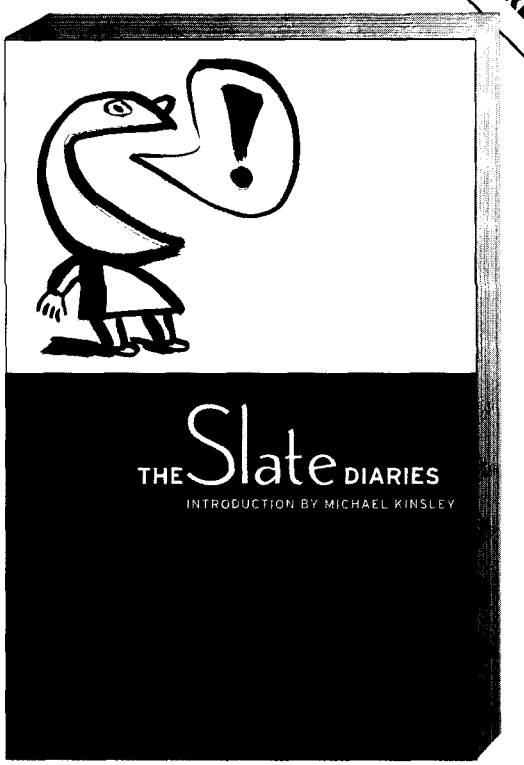

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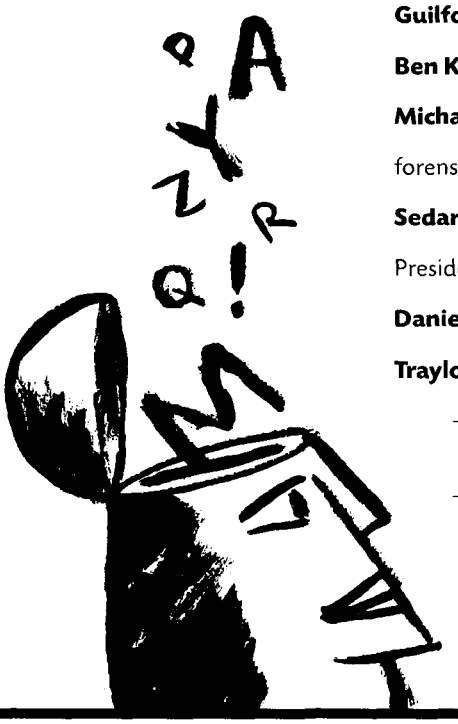

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either. Knowing too much moderates a polemic, and that is the case with this one.

And yet a polemic is unavoidable, when we look at the characterless housing developments that surround European cities and have taken up permanent occupancy in large parts of the centers of American cities, and at the equally characterless suburbs, and at what the market seems to create in the centers of typical American cities (a clump of skyscrapers surrounded by freeways). And when we contrast all these observations with what persists of cities from before World War II, polemic becomes even more unavoidable. But against whom, and for what?

That is Rykwert's difficulty. His book is strong but vague, and it is stronger in describing how we have come to the present situation than in marking any direction for the future. "My polemic is not against the disordered, even chaotic city but against the anonymous and alienating one, as it has grown in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.... My polemic is also against the more recent image of the city that has developed in the last two or three decades: the city as an image of social inequity." Both points help to define his stance. The first point tells us that Rykwert will be no fan of those who try to impose order on the city or to build new cities to realize their idea of appropriate order. The second point—on the city as an "image of social inequity"—is, in the context of contemporary criticism of the city, more interesting and controversial; but it is not referred to again.

Still, it is possible to clarify what Rykwert is trying to say by attending to what he does not say. There is no discussion of the city as uniquely the site of inequality, where rich and poor come together in close proximity; nor is there any discussion of ethnic and racial inequality in the city. The latter themes dominate urban studies today, but they are not any part of *The Seduction of Place*. Recall the recent public television series on New York City: again and again the experts on screen reminded us, to the point of boredom, that New York is a city of the very rich and the very poor. Or, if one looks at a major current work on the American city, Janet Abu-Lughod's *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles*, one will see again that the theme of social and racial inequality is dominant. Indeed, one could make a good case for this emphasis on social issues; but they are not what interests Rykwert.

For the social issues do not reach what is, for him, the heart of the matter. As against sociologists, traffic experts, economists, and futurologists, Rykwert is interested in "the physical fabric of the city—its touch and smell as well as its sights...." "My view of the city", he confesses, "is probably conditioned by my disability—I am not, nor have I ever been, a driver." A remarkable confession, for an architectural historian and urbanist! One wonders if it is pure coincidence that Abu-Lughod also tells us that "in the ten months I lived and worked in Los Angeles, I had to relearn (with great trepidation) how to drive, a skill I had lost in the ten years I was living in New York." I suspect that it is more than coincidence. The interest in cities begins with the love of cities, that is, with the intimate observation available to the walker in cities, however else it develops afterwards.

Chimes

Leaves flutter wild in wind.
Now, as day descends,
he hears the old wind-chimes.

Moon like a portal shines
through nearby trees again.
Wind plays on the chimes.

His neighbors' lights go on
—gold from the windowpanes.
A fence and garden dims.

All matter must succumb
he thinks, as darkness climbs.
Houses lose their lines.

Still, the old wind-chimes
play in the air again,
a tune without a mind.

Lisa Williams

WHAT IS IT, then, that the non-driving urbanist sees in the city that others might not see, or not note as sharply? One thing that he will note is how unfriendly the contemporary city is to the pedestrian or the flâneur. Rykwert is dismayed by contemporary institutional buildings and centers of governmental power, "physically remote and isolated behind barriers of parking and security precautions, which makes their impact on the passerby or even the driver-by one of abstraction or alienation." He refers to the Pentagon, but he could have just as plausibly referred to the Kennedy Center in Washington, which is almost unapproachable on foot.

What is distinctive in Rykwert's approach is that he resists the idea that cities are or should be shaped by "impersonal economic forces" or traffic efficiency alone. He reminds us that a great city has a distinct personality reflected in its built form, and that personality is not to be explained by economic functions or transportation needs, though certainly they play a part in making the city's form distinctive. He notes that in Mexico City, the largest city in the world by some measures, the vast sixteenth-century central square with its great public buildings around it—the National Palace, the cathedral, the law courts, the town hall—still plays a dominating role in the minds and the habits of its citizens.

So Rykwert is drawn to symbolic meaning, to the city as something more than a functioning (or malfunctioning) machine for the purposes of efficient economic life. Ancient cities, classical cities, medieval and Renaissance cities, and Baroque cities were all much more than that, as Rykwert and others have demonstrated. But he hesitates to take the position that the city's non-economic functions, religious and symbolic, should be our guide to action in the contemporary city. That, too, is simplistic. "The modern city is a city of contradictions.... it houses many *ethnes*, many cultures, many religions. [It] is too fragmentary, too full of contrast and strife; it must therefore have many faces, not one.... The lack of any coherent, explicit, image may therefore, in our circumstances, be a positive virtue, not a fault, or even a problem."

What hope is there, then, for a real and symbolic center such as the Zócalo in Mexico City for a city today? Rykwert is finally a realist, and realism has a way of muting and qualifying a polemic. If the city is as Rykwert describes it—and it is—what is left that one can be fully against, except perhaps the automobile? Rykwert does refer to the automobile as "catastrophic," on one of the few occasions when he raises his voice. But on second thought—and it is one of his strengths to think twice—he would undoubtedly recognize the futility of arguing against the automobile. Only Venice survives without cars, and it scarcely survives.

What is left for Rykwert is to describe how we got to where we are and what has been suggested to improve matters. He devotes the major part of the book to such an account, of how the world and its cities was transformed by the unending stream of new technologies that began in the eighteenth century, and of the various reform proposals that have shaped our thinking about the city. More or less familiar ideas are reviewed expertly, from

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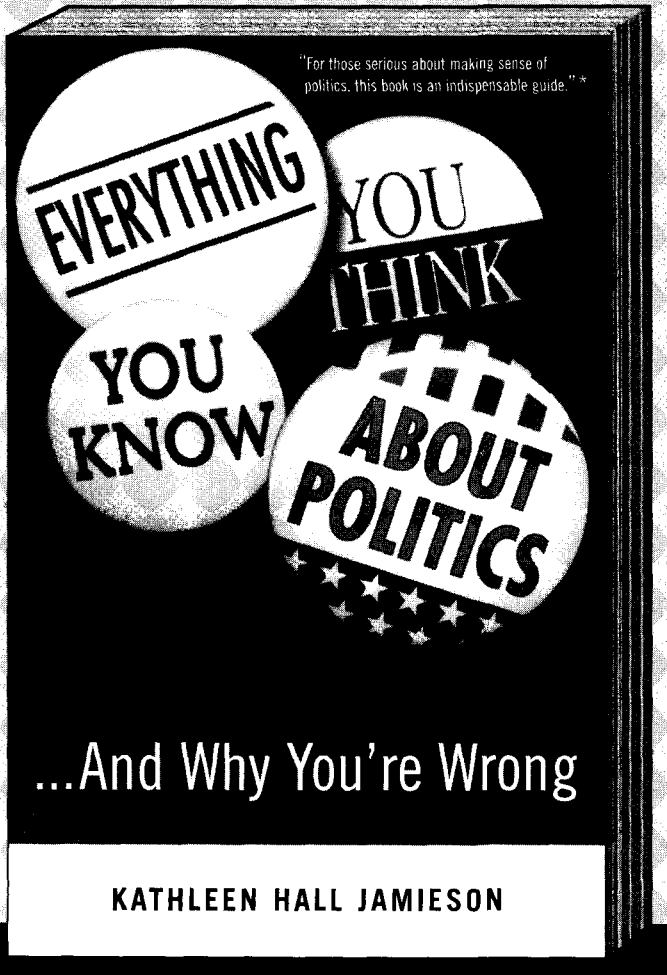

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proposals for utopian communities by Charles Fourier and others, through the story of Ebenezer Howard's influential garden city proposal and its progeny, to Le Corbusier's vision of skyscrapers in a park. The new cities that have been built as capitals on the basis of a single unified design—New Delhi, Canberra, Chandigarh, Brasilia, Islamabad—are briefly considered. Rykwert writes enthusiastically about most of them.

BUT THERE IS still the task proposed in the subtitle: what about the city in the twenty-first century? It is a fact that nothing much of great interest from the point of view of urban fabric or form is being proposed these days. Cities in the United States seem to worry most about building new ballparks or convention centers, which are hardly of interest if they are placed on the outskirts, and not much help if they are placed in the center. Some cities compete in building the highest skyscrapers, or the most dramatic (or outlandish) museums. The "new urbanists," the liveliest current group of urban thinkers and activists, concentrate on making new suburbs that they hope will be as interesting and lively as nineteenth-century towns, which is no great ambition, useful as it may be. There seems to be very little in the way of new approaches to the city that are responsive to the enormous changes that are transforming economies and societies.

After a tour of the present-day horizon, Rykwert ends, rather surprisingly, with something of a paean to New York, particularly to the New York that has become the emblematic form of the modern city, the city of the middle decades of the twentieth century. That, one would think, can scarcely be a model for the city of the twenty-first century. The cover of Rykwert's book shows the Chrysler Building, which we should recall was completed seventy years ago. His choice in one sense is not surprising: the definitive images of the modern city are images of New York, not London or Paris or Tokyo or Kuala Lumpur (even though the latter now houses the tallest skyscraper in the world). But is New York really a model for the twenty-first century?

Rykwert reminds us of the uniqueness of the term "Manhattanization," which was "coined for the process of making ... more or less like Manhattan. A compliment like that has not been conferred on any other metropolis. Not even 'Romanize' had that sense...." Fine; but why New York, why Manhattan, at the end of an inquiry into "the city in the twenty-first century"? It is not easy to say, and Rykwert struggles with that. New York is not the largest city in the world, and soon it may not be even the largest city in the United States, and it is certainly not the most up-to-date city, and it has many competitors, depending on how one defines the terms, as the most varied and the most diverse city in America. New York does not house a political capital (it is not even the capital of New York State), nor does it house the greatest universities. It is the capital of fashion more than of culture.

SO WHY NEW YORK? What is it emblematic of? What does it symbolize? Rykwert throws out suggestions that remind us of his distinguished work on the city in the ancient world, which was to its inhabitants symbolic of themselves as a people, or of the world, or of the body; and he obscurely hints that something like this may explain the hold of New York on the imagination. He seizes on the unchanging shape of Manhattan (it is true that most other American cities are formless), "outlined by its three great rivers. Nor has the manifest immobility of its boundaries really been compromised by the increasing number ... of bridges, tunnels and funiculars. And in this it may be unique among North American cities." Thus, "the citizen of Manhattan, and perhaps those of the outlying boroughs, can know themselves to be members of that colossal articulated body. The power of this image alone could never have made Manhattan the capital of the world, but it has certainly made it feel that it was the city that could assume this role, one it will probably keep for the foreseeable future..."

New York, the capital of the world? That is quite a claim, and I am not sure that it makes any sense. But Rykwert is stubborn, and vague: "The peculiar circumstances that have made Manhattan ... the capital of the whole globalized world are unique to it. They are not, in themselves, positive powers or virtues, but they present one of the great challenges to any urban development over the next century." I agree that there seems to be no way of getting away from New York, even if history and theory give us no good reason to end there or to stay there. Yes, it is the city most friendly still to the pedestrian and the flâneur, but is that really our future? Most of America has not voted that way. For most Americans (and, one suspects, for many Europeans and East Asians, too), New York is an *old* city; and while they may build partial replicas (accessible by automobile and surrounded by parking, of course) as entertainments, they would never think of living there. A great place to visit, as the visitors say.

WHILE TECHNOLOGY MAKES us all alike, our cities still, or at least some of our cities, remind us of differences—historical differences, differences in values, differences in personality. After her useful and thorough progress through all the factors that have made New York and Chicago and Los Angeles what they are today—their sites, their economic opportunities, their relative attractiveness to new immigrants, their varying governments, their shifting economies—and after her consideration of "globalization" and "hegemony" and "Fordism," Janet Abu-Lughod finally casts aside all the abstractions and the great trends that she has treated for hundreds of pages and falls back on a mixture of experience and common sense. "In short," she concludes, "these cities are more than the sum of their parts, just as they are much more than the products of globalization. Throughout my analysis I have so often picked apart the pieces that I seem to have lost their essences—what I have always referred to as the unique 'personalities' of individual cities. I cannot end, then, before reassembling the parts to demonstrate how different are the cityscapes, the mannerisms, and indeed the social relations that people form with one another."

And she nicely characterizes the distinctive feel and experience of the three cities well. At the end of her book, back in New York, she describes a typical New York experience:

> Last evening I returned from the movies (on foot, of course, because some ten movie houses lie within walking distance of my apartment). Passing through Union Square Park ... I stopped ... to marvel at a juxtaposition one would be extremely unlikely to find in a single location in Los Angeles or Chicago. One can fill in the details. And if one says, oh, that is only downtown Manhattan, the fact is one can experience something quite similar in great stretches of Brooklyn and the Bronx.

It really is this aspect of cities that seizes the lover of cities. Abu-Lughod works her way through the history, the statistics, and the economic forces, but she ends up on the sidewalk, marveling at the complexity that has been created by an extraordinary history, and enamored of it. What is most urgent about her book, and Joseph Rykwert's book, is not so much their analysis of the urban condition as their devotion to cities. The city has been under attack by theorists and sprawlers for a long time now, but these fine books provide necessary examples of how the city may be intelligently loved. ■

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Male Fraud

I HAD THOUGHT "POINTY-HEAD" was one of those antiquated phrases, like "square," that nobody used anymore, except ironically. But just last week Rich Lowry, the editor of *National Review*, wrote an online column in which he called Al Gore "a pointy-head intellectual too liberal for the American public." The column was part of a campaign Lowry and his magazine are waging in defense of "manliness" and against the namby-pamby, feminized cultural elite. (It's a popular crusade at their conservative rival, *The Weekly Standard*, as well.) The essence of this view, from what I can glean from *National Review*, is that real men don't need a bunch of federal pinheads to hold their hands, and they don't have much use for book-learnin', neither.

"BUSH TALKS OF TRUSTING THE PEOPLE instead of the bureaucrats in Washington. The attacks on his intellect could become part of it," writes Lowry. "Maybe we don't want a presidential candidate who can pronounce Kostunica or recite the constituent parts of Yugoslavia." This sort of line, coming from somebody who assuredly can recite the constituent parts of Yugoslavia, may sound galling. (After watching on television one of Lowry's lectures on manliness, the liberal comedian Al Franken challenged him to a fistfight.) But I see it as noble self-abnegation. Lowry, after all, has intelligently edited a major magazine at a young age; yet this well-read meritocrat seems to aspire to be a hick. Lowry's ethos, in the hands of an anti-intellectual politician, is convenient and self-affirming. No such comfort exists for the anti-intellectual intellectual.

TODAY'S CONSERVATIVE ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM is especially astonishing because the right used to actively cultivate an aura of braininess. Claiming they had become "the party of ideas," conservatives established a swath of journals and think tanks to reinforce their intellectual bona fides. Now you have conservatives openly associating intellectualism with liberalism. Part of the impetus, of course, is the need to rationalize Bush and disparage Gore. It's impossible to claim that Bush is smarter than Gore, so conservatives must instead downplay the importance of intellect. Bush "feels uncomfortable sounding better than other people," explained yet another *National Review* column. "Unfortunately, this distinction was blurred by a fog of what the pointy-heads call 'substance.'" In other words, real men—men with round heads—don't know from Medicare.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE MANLINESS movement flirted (in a nonsexual way, of course) with John McCain—a candidate I also liked, but for non-testosterone-related reasons. With McCain out, Bush has become the candidate of men. But this is just as weird as his blue-blooded father running as a pork-rind-chomping populist in 1988. Gore played football and volunteered for Vietnam; W. was a male cheerleader who took refuge in the National Guard. If you are the kind of guy who feels the need to have a man's man in the White House—and I am not—it's far from apparent that Bush should be your candidate. I grew up in the Midwest, and of the things that men were not supposed to do, cheerleading ranked just below wearing rouge and just above knowing what rouge is. The only evidence of Bush's manliness that conservatives can point to, as far as I can tell, is that he's dumb.

THE ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM THAT conservatives express so explicitly has been echoed, in a more muted form, in the mainstream press. Granted, a strain of anti-intellectualism has always run through our politics. But, rather than ameliorate that tendency, the political coverage now aggravates it. The pundits do not denigrate intelligence per se; instead, they denigrate the qualities associated with intelligence. The cliché that has been affixed to Gore is "the smartest kid in the class." While this might sound like a compliment, in the current environment it's actually an insult, signifying an unseemly desire to prove yourself smarter than your opponent.

IT IS TRUE THAT REPORTERS HAVE also turned Bush's anti-intellectualism into a liability (although not as great a liability as Gore's excessive intellectualism). But this has been done in such a mindless way—for instance, testing Bush's ability to summon the names of foreign countries and leaders—as to make the issue seem pointless. The standard is, at once, too low and too high. Too low because any twelve-year-old could memorize enough foreign trivia for the media to judge him competent at foreign affairs. And too high because many of the details upon which Bush has tripped up—such as the name of the president of Chechnya—are niggling matters that a presidential candidate could be forgiven for not having on the tip of his tongue. The triviality of the charges against Bush has helped defuse the broader question of his capacity for, and interest in, understanding policy. If intelligence is just a matter of reciting foreign names—and since Bush as president would have staffers to brief him on such details—why should we care about it at all?

IN THE FIRST DEBATE, JIM LEHRER asked, in an impatient (for him, anyway) tone, "As a practical matter, both of you want to bring prescription drugs to seniors, correct?" The assumption here is widely shared: There are no important domestic policy differences between the candidates, and any claim to the contrary is therefore tendentious. This causes an acute problem for Gore, who has tried to bolster his case with facts and figures. Indeed, the rationale for Bush's domestic platform rests upon a series of empirical propositions—his tax cut would raise the share of taxes paid by the rich, his plan to privatize Social Security would raise the rate of return without increasing risk—that are demonstrably false. When Gore has pointed this out, Bush's response has been either ad hominem (Gore "invented the calculator") or relativistic ("fuzzy math"). Bush's replies are fundamentally anti-intellectual: They suggest that the truth of these numerical disputes cannot be independently determined and, even, that Gore's excessive reliance upon data is a sign of untrustworthiness. By failing to adjudicate the disputes empirically, the media accepts that view.

BUT WHILE REPORTERS DEEM THEMselves unqualified to make judgments about simple economic disagreements, they feel free to hand down psychological diagnoses with the assuredness of Freud. One recent *New York Times* story traces Gore's propensity to exaggerate anecdotes to a story his parents told about him when he was six. "How could Mr. Gore," asks the reporter, "be expected to know what was real and what was hype?" A recent *Times* editorial unintentionally parodied the psychobabble style of analysis that has become so popular. The candidates' "individual psychologies have figured in making taxes a central issue of the campaign," said the *Times*. If he can cut taxes, "the younger Bush will have succeeded where his father failed." And Gore's warnings "hark back to the New Deal populism of his father." So this isn't about competing theories of government or economic classes, it's about two middle-aged guys working through their feelings toward their dads. Men.

JONATHAN CHAIT

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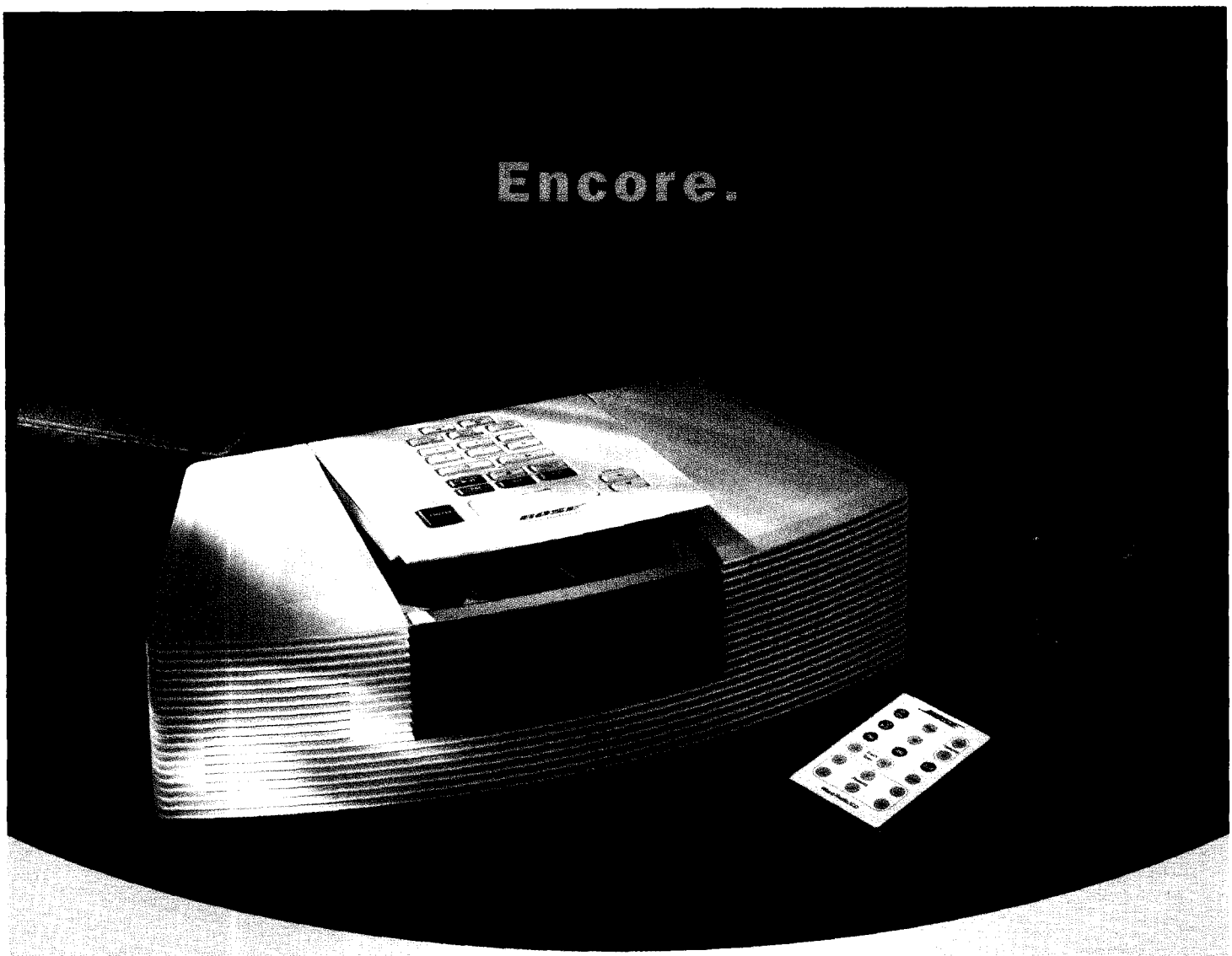

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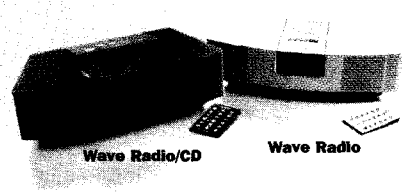

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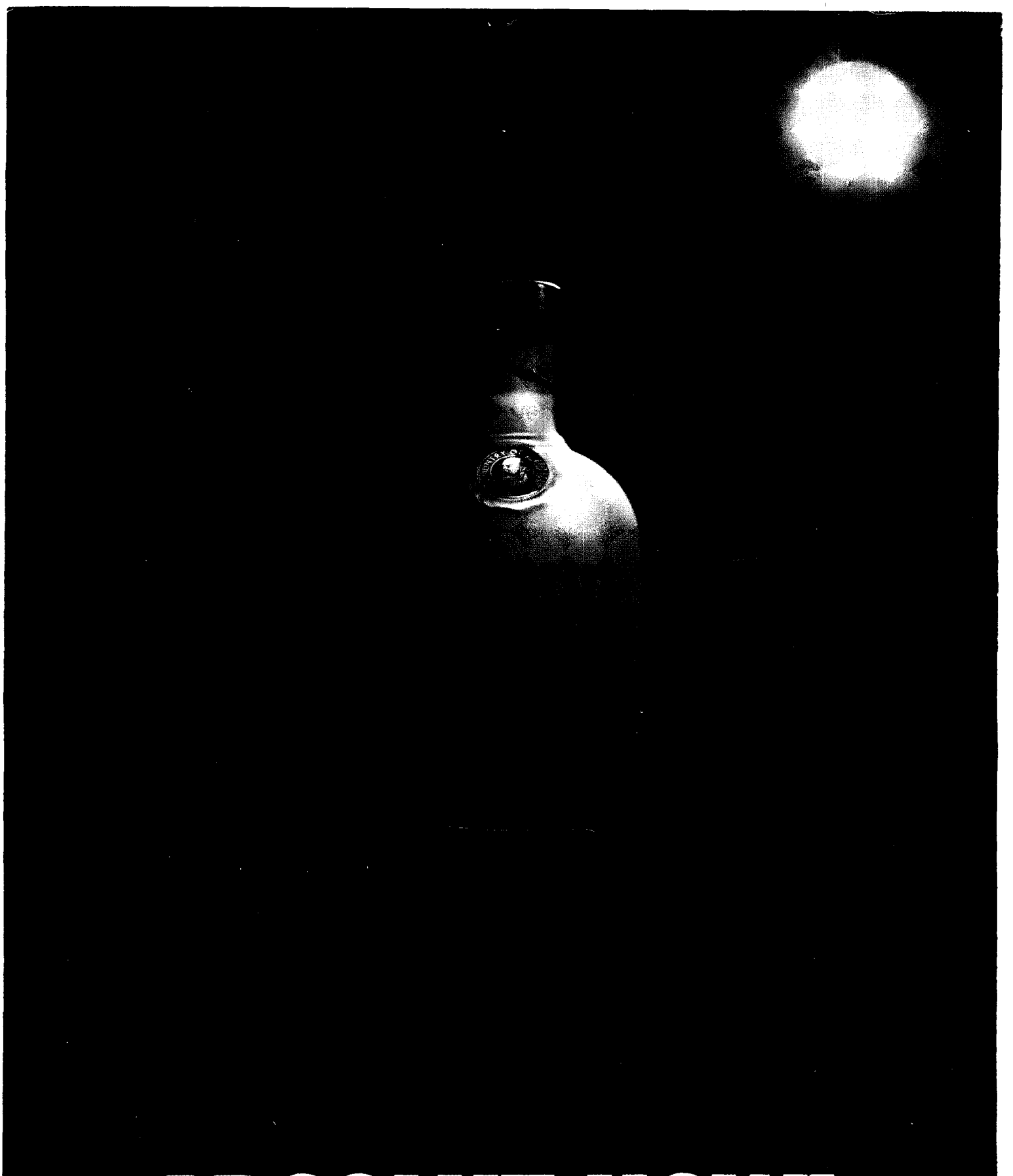

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